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A

DIALOGUE

IN THE

MANNER of PLATO,

On the SUPERIORITY of the

Pleaſures of the Underſtanding

TO THE

PLEASURES of the SENSES.

LONDON:
Printed by W. WILKINS, in *Lombard-ſtreet*.

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To His ROYAL HIGHNESS

FREDERICK,

PRINCE of WALES.

I Beg Leave to obſerve to YOUR ROYAL HIGHNESS, by way of Introduction to the following Piece, that the fair Idea of Virtue is form-

ed with the greateſt Beauty and Simplicity, and placed in the moſt agreeable Light, by conſidering it as a Refinement on Pleaſure. The elegant Choice of Pleaſures is not only the Teſt of Delicacy and Politeneſs, but the diſtinguiſhing Mark of Moral Excellence and Perfection: And the Skill of making this Choice is of itſelf ſufficient to direct our Steps through the Labyrinth that leads to Happineſs.

THIS Science, in the Extent it was delivered by SOCRATES, contains all the Secrets of Political as well as Moral

Moral Knowledge, and comprehends the entire Theory of Government. The Model of it, before it can be raiſed up in its full Dimenſions, and exemplified in ſo beautiful and ſo magnificent a Structure, muſt be previouſly formed in the Governing Mind, by exerciſing over its Subject Faculties that Legiſlative Skill by which States and Empires are taught to flouriſh.

THE uſeful Philoſophy of this plain and ſimple ATHENIAN was not confined to the obſcure Retirements of the Academy, but introduced by an Addreſs peculiar to him into

into the politeſt Aſſemblies. The Converſations maintained by him on Moral Subjects, became faſhionable Entertainments at *Athens*; and were ſo agreeable to the Taſte of a People famed for Wit and Eloquence, that they were faithfully recorded, or perhaps faintly imitated, in Dialogues by the fineſt Writers of that Age.

HIS Manner was, to mingle in the Publick Exerciſes and Diverſions of the *Athenian* Youth, and to inſinuate himſelf into their Familiarity by the Charms of graceful Mirth and Pleaſantry. Thoſe of

of an ingenuous Diſpoſition, or an elevated Rank, were chiefly favoured with his agreeable Inſtruction, as they were moſt ſuſceptible of it themſelves, and moſt capable of rendering it ſerviceable to the Publick. Thus he infuſed into them a Love of Truth and Virtue, in that early Seaſon of Life, while their Minds were ſerene, and pure of Prejudice, unengaged as yet in the tumultuous Scene of Publick Affairs, and untainted with falſe Sentiments of Honour.

HIS Genius, notwithſtanding it was ſo much admired

mired in that Seat of Knowledge, was confined in *Athens* to a narrow Sphere. The utmoſt it could there aſpire to, was to form the Minds of Private Perſons, amidſt the prevailing Diſorders of that licentious State, by the Injuſtice of which it was at length oppreſſed. Had his Philoſophy been eſpouſed by a King of *Macedon*, or a *Perſian* Emperor, inſtead of humbly contenting himſelf with the ſlender Praiſe of moderating the enterpriſing Spirit of ALCIBIADES, or kindling virtuous Affections in the Breaſt of his beloved PHEDRUS, he might then have

have gained the nobler Triumph of allaying the deſtructive Ambition of ALEXANDER, or improving the engaging Humanity of CYRUS, the moſt amiable of all the Eaſtern Princes. Had he been reſerved to ſome happier Age, and lived under ſome well-regulated Monarchy, ſuch as by an Improvement on the Wiſdom of ancient Times has been eſtabliſhed in *Great Britain*, he might have found yet nobler Employment, and perhaps have been inſtrumental in introducing that happy State of Human Affairs, which he affirmed with ſo much Strength of Reaſon

would then take place, when true and genuine Philoſophy ſhould be joined with Regal Power.

As I have aſſumed a Character ſo much celebrated by all Antiquity, a Deſire of preſerving the Dignity of it, by imitating this nobleſt Part of his Conduct, and diſplaying it to the greateſt Advantage, has made me ambitious of the Honour of laying the following Dialogue at the Feet of Your ROYAL HIGHNESS. The Attempt to copy after ſo fine a Genius, would be allowed not to have been unſucceſsful, if it afforded an Enter-

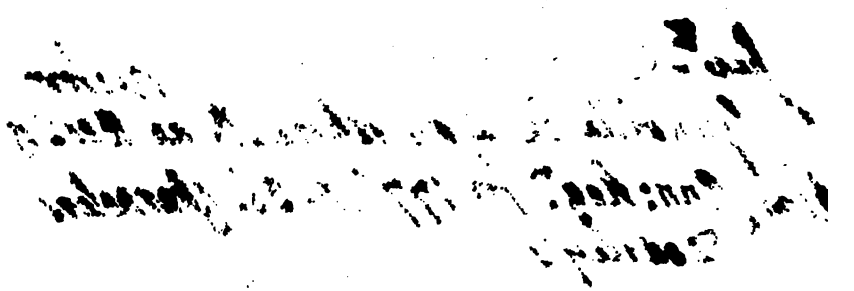
Entertainment agreeable to Your elegant Taſte. This I fear is only a pleaſing Imagination, too flattering to be indulged, did it not give Occaſion to the real Pleaſure of ſubſcribing myſelf, with the greateſt Zeal and Reſpect,

Your ROYAL HIGHNESS's

Moſt Dutiful and

Moſt Devoted Servant,

GEORGE STUBBES.



A

DIALOGUE

ON THE

Superiority of the *Pleaſures*

OF THE

UNDERSTANDING.

SOCRATES, PHEDRUS, PROTARCHUS, PHILEBUS.

SOCRATES.

O what delightful Region am I tranſported! And whither, PHEDRUS, are you conducting my wandring Steps, through theſe winding Shades, this Length of lofty Groves and ſpreading Lawns? Do you ſtill perſiſt in refuſing to tell me, why with ſuch eager haſte and ſilence

ſence you paſs by ſo many unregarded Beauties of Art and Nature, unkindly concealing the Thoughts that ſo agreeably amuſe you, and diſſembling the ſecret Mirth, breaking forth by ſtealth in unwilling Smiles, and betraying, I fear, ſome treacherous Purpoſe? I much ſuſpect you would not have waſted ſo much Eloquence, or employed ſuch Importunity, in drawing me from my beloved Haunts in *Athens*; from the Concourſe of her inquiſitive Citizens, the Exerciſes of her Heroick Youth, and the Retirements of her Philoſophers; only to entertain me with the rural Charms of theſe fruitful Vales, the groteſque Wildneſſes of theſe rocky Shoars, the agreeable Cadence of the reſounding Waves, or the diſtant View of that beauteous* Iſland proudly lifting its Brow amidſt the Clouds, and terminating the uncertain Proſpect in the Skies.

PHEDRUS.

THESE various Avenues, which might tempt Wiſdom herſelf to wander in them, or ſeduce the heedleſs Steps of Contemplation, conſpire in leading you, I hope not unwillingly, to the moſt delightful Part of this enchanting Situation, the elegant Retreat of PROTARCHUS. Hither this noble *Athenian*, whoſe Virtues you have ſo long

* *The* Scene *of this* Dialogue *is a Part of the Territories of* ATHENS, *on the Coaſt oppoſite to the Iſland* EUBOEA.

been

been ambitious of becoming more nearly acquainted with, often retires from the Applauſe of *Euboea*, happy in his Guardian Care, to revolve with ſilent Joy the Succeſs of his paſt Counſels, or perhaps to form ſome new harmonious Deſign, worthy of ſo fair an Iſland, which has the Honour to belong to the Imperial Miſtreſs of *Greece*.

SOCRATES.

THE delicious Country, inviting his Retreat, ſeems a fruitful Field of Bliſs, fairer than the Dwellings of Men, and more reſembling the happy Seats deſtined to reward the Virtuous Toils of Heroes: Or, if an Earthly Abode, ſuch as might be miſtaken for ſome ſoft *Perſian* Province, and its riſing Structures perhaps be imagined the Metropolis of the flowery Region, did not a Profuſion of our Attick Elegance diſtinguiſh it from a Scene of Eaſtern Pride and Luxury.

PHEDRUS.

THE well combining Beauties of Art and Nature, you ſurvey with ſuch a curious Eye, reflect juſt Honours on the worthy Poſſeſſor. His Genius informs the whole Deſign, and directs the Labours of the various Artificers conſpiring to adorn it. The beautiful Structures roſe from his harmonious Thought, more powerful and more enchanting than the Harp of AMPHION:

Nor are there wanting, amidſt the favourite Grove, Trees of diſtinguiſhed Beauty, which boaſt the Honour of having been planted by his own Hand.

SOCRATES.

THE ſmiling Plants ſeem to rejoice in the Favour of their Lord, and to bloom with freſh Verdure beneath his Eye. Tell me, are they now honoured with his Preſence?

PHEDRUS.

SEE where, preventing my Reply, juſt at the Entrance of this Spacious Walk, faſt by a Row of flowering Limes, he comes this way, accompanied by a ſelect Band of noble Friends.

SOCRATES.

LET us retire behind this leafy Fence, from whence unobſerved, through the opening Greens, we may at due diſtance view them paſſing.

PHEDRUS.

YOUR Curioſity ſhall be much better gratified: I may now ſafely acquaint you, that it was my ſecret Purpoſe, in decoying you hither, to introduce you to this polite Aſſembly.

SOCRATES.

PERFIDIOUS Guide! Is this the promiſed Solitude, this the ſilent ſafe Retreat, whither you engaged to conduct my too

too credulous Simplicity? * It was thus you lead me along the winding Bank of *Iliſſus*, by waving in that inviting Hand the Speech of LYSIAS, like a fragrant Bough held forth to entice a ſimple Fawn; and compelled me, by attempting the dangerous Deſcription of BEAUTY, to refute the Falſehoods maintained by that ſubtle Orator. * It was thus you drew me in, by an inſidious Propoſal, at the Banquet of AGATHO, to vye with the inimitable Eloquence of that youthful Poet in celebrating the Praiſes of LOVE. How many Diſputes has your immoderate Love of Philoſophy betrayed me into? How many Dialogues has it occaſioned by ſuch little Stratagems? But your ambitious Aim ſhall here be diſappointed. I fly to the Protection of this friendly Bower. Cover me, ye Woodbines, with your embracing Shade; defend me from the Treachery of PHEDRUS.

PHEDRUS.

IN vain the timorous Hare hopes to remain concealed beneath the Covert, whilſt the watchful Woodman obſerves her unavailing Retreat.

SOCRATES.

LET me entreat you to partake with me the Safety of this flowery Cell. Alas!

* *Alluding to the two* Dialogues *of* PLATO *on* LOVE *and* BEAUTY, *which* PHEDRUS *is introduced as giving Occaſion to.*

what

what juſt Apology, what ſlight Pretence, can you find to excuſe ſo rude an Intruſion? You will not, I hope, own we are Philoſophers, the Sport of Stateſmen, and more contemptible in their Eſteem than Poets.

PHEDRUS.

I FEAR you think me very ſlow of Invention. What if I ſay, you are deſcended from DEDALUS, and inherit his Skill in Architecture? Or, if this be too much beyond your humble Ambition, ſuppoſe I recommend you to PROTARCHUS, as a Virtuoſo of a lower Claſs, skilful in Flowers and fragrant Shrubs, and deſirous to preſent him with a Plan of ſome pretty Plantation, ſome agreeable Wilderneſs in Miniature.

SOCRATES.

AND how do you expect that I ſhall anſwer your kind Recommendation, conſcious, as you are, that I can ſcarcely diſtinguiſh the Myrtle from the Hawthorn, or the Violet from the Hyacinth?

PHEDRUS.

I MAY ſafely leave it to your own Genius, ever fruitful in agreeable Stratagems, to extricate yourſelf out of every Difficulty with your accuſtomed Pleaſantry and Eaſe. But ſee! we are obſerved: Let us advance to meet the Enemy you are ſo fearful to engage with.

PERMIT

PERMIT me, noble PROTARCHUS, to preſent to you this Stranger, worthy to be admitted to theſe delightful Seats, and capable of admiring with Judgment, or perhaps improving, the various Wonders of Art they are adorned with.

PROTARCHUS.

I SHALL be proud to receive a Gueſt ſo agreeably qualified.

SOCRATES.

LET me, me only, bear your juſt Reſentment, O generous and wiſe PROTARCHUS; but forgive the gentle Youth, who vainly hopes to excuſe our Error in violating this tempting Receſs, by deceiving you with a feigned Character of his Companion; like the fond Virgin, who, under the Diſguiſe of a Painter, endeavoured to introduce a concealed Lover, by putting a Pencil into his artleſs Hand. His Simplicity has been betrayed into this Indiſcretion by no injurious Deſign: But I am too ingenuous, or too unskilful, to aid the harmleſs Fraud.

PROTARCHUS.

THAT ingenuous Modeſty, the faithful Attendant on Merit, confirms the Judgment of your Companion. But ſay, does any Part remain unviſited by you, in this rude Wilderneſs, which courts your View, ambitious to be reformed by your Skill, or honoured with your Approbation?

SOCRATES.

WE have paſſed by a variety of Lawns, and chryſtal Lakes, green with pendant Groves, and reflecting inverted Obeliſques and floating Ornaments of Architecture. But amidſt the Confuſion of opening Proſpects and inviting Avenues, miſleading the uncertain Foot or wandring Eye, it is not poſſible to form a Judgment of ſo extenſive a Deſign, unleſs you lead me to the Principal Point of View, from whence only its Beauty can be underſtood; and permit me to ſurvey your ample Territories from this peculiar Spot, perhaps encloſed from Sight and reſerved as ſacred to your own Contemplation.

PROTARCHUS.

THESE Woods know no Encloſure or Reſerve, ſuch as you apprehend: This imaginary Spot, peculiar as you ſuppoſe to me alone, is a Secret which has eſcaped my Obſervation; I ſhall owe the Diſcovery of it to you.

SOCRATES.

HAD this fair Paradiſe been deſigned to be a Paſture for ſome beauteous Flock or Herd, it muſt I ſuppoſe have been plentifully furniſhed with refreſhing Streams and tender Herbage, ſuitable to the innocent Creatures feeding in it.

PROTARCHUS.

THIS the meaneſt Shepherd or Herdſman might have taught you.

SOCRATES.

IF it had been to be inhabited by ſome nobler Animal, the Lord of the ſubject Foreſt, its horrid Shades and deepening Glooms muſt, I preſume (with humble ſubmiſſion to this lordly Savage) have been diſpoſed in ſome different Manner, more convenient for his dark and dreadful Abode.

PROTARCHUS.

THE Lion will not graze the peaceful Mead amongſt the Heifers; nor will the Tyger innocently browſe with the gentle Fawn or Kid.

SOCRATES.

IF then the delightful Seat, in order to render it truly beautiful, muſt be ſuited to the Inhabitant, it is obvious to diſcover the Rule of its juſt Meaſures and Proportions.

PROTARCHUS.

YOU would be widely miſtaken in confining this Rule to a fond Indulgence to my peculiar Fancy. On the contrary, it is my Ambition to render it ſuitable to the various Taſtes of all my Friends.

SOCRATES.

ITS wide Dimenſions witneſs well the Largeneſs of your Heart. But can you equally comply with every Taſte; or is there

ſome Preference due to a Genius of a ſuperior Elegance?

PROTARCHUS.

SOME Diſtinction may fairly be allowed.

SOCRATES.

AND thoſe, I preſume, are beſt intitled to this Diſtinction, whoſe correſponding Sentiments are by a juſt Sympathy conformed to the Rule of yours.

PROTARCHUS

I CONFESS the Deſire of pleaſing them is moſt prevailing.

SOCRATES.

YOUR own Mind is then the Principal Point of View, from whence it muſt be determined, whether this Profuſion of Magnificence be ſuited to the Advancement of your Happiness and Honour.

PHILEBUS.

I SUSPECTED what Kind of Knowledge this learned Virtuoſo was Maſter of, and well foreſaw your Mind was the Plantation he would undertake to regulate. You may now expect a ſtrict Enquiry, what Sciences are ſeen to bloom and flouriſh there; what Affections are ſuffered to grow too luxuriant and irregular.

PROTARCHUS.

IT is you, PHILEBUS, who have been my Inſtructor, you beſt can give an Account of the ſlender Improvements of your humble Follower.

SO-

SOCRATES.

THE Teacher muſt be eminent, who has been honoured with ſo great a Diſciple. May I preſume to ask, what his Inſtructions tend to?

PROTARCHUS.

HE poſſeſſes in the greateſt Perfection the Science of Pleaſures, and is accompliſhed in all the Politeneſſes that miniſter to Delight.

SOCRATES.

I SHOULD be much tempted to envy him this happy Skill in the nobleſt of all the Sciences, ſhould he refuſe to gratify my ardent Thirſt with a Taſte of ſuch deſirable Knowledge.

PHILEBUS.

PROTARCHUS has ſhewn at once the moſt refined Dexterity and Complaiſance; in artfully diſengaging himſelf from the Diſpute, by making me an undeſerved Compliment, which I am forced to ſubmit to, leſt I ſhould be ſo unhappy as to diſappoint his Intention by declining it. But I take the Liberty of entring my Proteſtation, and calling the conſcious Groves to witneſs for me, that it is purely in obedience to his Authority, and from a fear of incurring his mortal Diſpleaſure, not in the leaſt from an Ambition to diſtinguiſh my ſelf in a Philoſophical Encounter, that I aſſume the imaginary Character he has aſſigned to me, and accept the Honour of entertaining

his agreeable Gueſt with my little Skill in Pleaſures.

PERMIT me then, O venerable Stranger, who leaving the learned Shades of the Academy, have deign'd to honour theſe with your Preſence, to aſſure you by our beginning Friendſhip (if a mutual Inclination to the ſame delightful Science, may give me the Privilege to call you Friend,) that it has never been my Cuſtom to refuſe a Companion in allaying a noble Thirſt. And ſince Pleaſure is the lovely *Naiad*, that pours the golden Urn exciting our common Deſire, what if reclin'd on this violet-embroidered Bank, beneath theſe ſpreading Limes, we freely taſte theſe Waters of Delight, perpetually rejoycing the Heart, and renewing each enflamed Appetite.

SOCRATES.

METHINKS I hear the Voice of ſome gracious Power, offering to conduct me to the Seats of Bliſs, to guide me to perpetual uninterrupted Joys, and teach me to employ every Faculty, and fill up every Capacity of Pleaſure. If your Science extends to this Perfection of Happineſs, a Statue, frequented with conſecrated Wreaths and more than Human Honours, ſhall be erected to you in the Temple of Philoſophy.

PHILEBUS.

THIS is an Honour far exceeding my Ambition. I only pretend to the Skill of

teach-

teaching the empty Science of Happineſs, not to the Power of beſtowing it; a Science eaſy attainable, where the rich Materials it is to be employed on are ſufficiently ſupplied; where every Appetite points (unerring) to its Object, each ſoft Deſire whiſpers an Admonition to Enjoyment.

SOCRATES.

YOU are then like ſome skilful Artificer, who undertakes to teach the Art of carving or engraving in Gold or Cedar, not to furniſh the rich Materials to be embelliſhed by it.

PHILEBUS.

YOUR apt Alluſion has well explained my Meaning.

SOCRATES.

IF ſo, you greatly undervalue your own Art; ſince the curious Workmanſhip, if juſtly wrought, will be allowed by every knowing Judge far to ſurpaſs the unformed Gold or Cedar. We may therefore thankfully accept, on your own Terms, the generous Offer you have made. The bounteous Hand of Nature has abundantly ſupplied the Materials of Happineſs; and would you impart to the World the Skill of rightly employing them, the Murmurs of Mankind would ceaſe, diffuſive Joy would ſpread its Golden Wing over the enlightned Earth, and Nations lift their Hands in gratitude to their divine Inſtructor.

PHI-

PHILEBUS.

IT is not the want of Science, but of Eloquence, which hinders the Accompliſhment of the great Effect you have aſcribed to me in the Extravagance of Raillery. You will, I preſume, admit that Nature has not been leſs liberal in inſtructing her Children how to uſe her Gifts, than in beſtowing them.

SOCRATES.

SINCE Nature has furniſhed all the Means of Happineſs; the Power of attaining Knowledge, her choiceſt Gift, and moſt conducing to that End, muſt be underſtood to be included.

PHILEBUS.

COULD you then doubt of my Succeſs in guiding them to Happineſs, had I ſufficient Eloquence to perſuade her diſobedient Children to comply with her Inſtructions?

SOCRATES.

PERHAPS not; if you have the Skill of ſufficiently explaining to them thoſe Inſtructions.

PHILEBUS.

THEY are delivered in a Language wanting no Explanation; well underſtood even by the Inferior Tribes of Creatures, ſwayed by her kindly Inſtincts, diffuſed through the Earth, the Air, and Seas, her various Kingdoms: nor has the ſweet Enthuſiaſm ſpared the Muſe, her Prieſteſs, who inſpi-

red

ſed her ſofteſt Son ANACREON to ſing her Dictates, and in moving Numbers to unfold her Oracles, breathing ſoft Deſire to melt her ſtubborn Sons, and write her tender Law in Human Hearts.

SOCRATES.

WHO has not heard the gentle Poet's Fame? But alas! his Inſtructions only reach to a few obvious Pleaſures. His Harp perpetually reſounds with Love, wanting Variety. He oft diſplays his happy Skill in forming the chequered Dance of Youths and blooming Maids, returning in ſoft Triumph from the Vintage; and ſometimes perhaps his genial Fancy condeſcends to carve the ſwelling Cluſters on the Bowl, capacious of the wanton Juice.

PHILEBUS.

I leaſt ſuſpected that the Want of Variety would have been imputed to his inconſtant Muſe, induſtrious to recount his Loves in every Clime, and mark his wanton Flight from Flower to Flower, reſembling the Thyme-purſuing Bee, curious to ſip the unnumbered Sweets of *Hybla* or *Hymettus*.

SOCRATES.

OR perhaps reſembling the cruel Canker-worm preying on the tender Blooms, and ſtaining the faireſt Flowers, the bluſhing Roſe and pureſt Lilly, harbouring oft the fell Deſtroyer, emboſomed within their fold.

folded Leaves, or newly opening Bud. This wanton Spoil of Beauty gives juſt Cauſe to fear the Love-reſounding Harmony too often is compoſed of Diſcord, Jealouſy and Hatred. Methinks a Heart ſo tender ſhould have been deterred by the never ceaſing Complaints of Lovers, and the bitter Tears of injured Beauties, from gathering Roſes fenced with ſuch pointed Thorns.

PHILEBUS.

HE ill deſerves to taſte of Pleaſures, whoſe timerous Hand ſhrinks from the little Pains that are ſometimes intermix'd with them.

SOCRATES.

THEN it ſeems, the Happineſs you promiſe, is not perpetual, nor uninterrupted with Pains and Sorrows; and thoſe not light or tranſient, if melancholy Experience may be allowed to judge of them. Let us next conſider the Variety you offer, anſwering no uſeful End. For, why ſhould we deſire to taſte unnumbered Streams, the Daughters of the Ocean, recounted by the tedious Muſe? Why wander in laborious Search of Foreign Springs, leſs ſweet, or languiſh after other Waters, leſs pure and healthful? Whilſt this murmuring Rivulet, ſufficing Thirſt, chides our Inconſtancy, and mocks our needleſs Toil.

PHILEBUS.

DO not you perceive that the treacherous Deſign of ſeducing us into an ungrate-

ful

ful Neglect of Taſting the various Sweets Nature has kindly provided for us (doubtleſs for want of Arguments in ſuch a Cauſe) has inſenſibly betrayed you into the Uſe of Poetic Numbers and Fictions?

SOCRATES.

IF I have taken the Infection, breathed from your flowery Language, you complain of it with a very ill Grace, forgetful that, violating the Law of Philoſophical Combat by the uſe of theſe forbidden Arms, you firſt conſulted the Oracles of ANACREON, and introduced the Charms of Poeſy into the Diſpute. But do you think, by the Help of this ſlender Evaſion, to put me off with ſo poor a Notion of Variety? Can you hope to ſatisfy a Gueſt expecting to be entertained by you with Fruits of every different Form and Flavour, "in Coat rough, or ſmooth Rinde, in bearded Huſk or Shell," (you ſee I claim the Liberty of uſing theſe borrowed Charms) by multiplying, inelegantly, thoſe of one ſingle Kind? Or, would you allow him to be a skilful Floriſt, whoſe incurious Choice was confined to a few obvious Sorts of Flowers, unknowing of the innumerable Tribes, diſperſed in unfrequented Wilds, or diſtinguiſhed by Art and Culture?

PHILEBUS.

THE Variety you expect from me, may perhaps be the Amuſement of the idle Floriſt,

riſt, more curious to know than to enjoy the Sweets his Hand ſo fondly cheriſhes; or the ſervile Toil of the Gardener, ambitious to improve the untaſted Fruits, preferred to deck his Maſter's Table: But the nobler Skill of taſting theſe various Delights is widely different from the tedious Task of ranging their numerous Tribes, or giving Names to them. This is the Privilege of a Mind at Eaſe, not overcharged with Thought; a Mind unembarraſſed in its Choice by their Multiplicity, and uninterrupted in its Enjoyments by the needleſs Care of nicely prying into their Nature. How pleaſant is it to diſplay our careleſs Limbs beneath the Vine, offering its unſought Cluſters from the compliant Branches, without enquiring from what antient Stock they derive their doubtful Birth, or whence the generous Purple flows! How ſweet to crown our Temples with Flowers unknown! How enchanting to wander after Joys untried, to open untrodden Paths of Pleaſure, and to diſcover fruitful Regions of Delight, yet unexplored by the cautious Steps of ſlow Experience! How cold and languid is every Pleaſure, when fully underſtood! How dull and tedious the Repetition of the well-known Scenes, affording nothing new to excite an agreeable Surpriſe or a pleaſing Expectation! What generous Follower of Happineſs would ſit down contented

tented to enjoy by Rule and Meaſure; to reſtrain thoſe unbounded Deſires, that range through the Univerſe, within the narrow Limits of his Knowledge; and ſcrupulouſly reſolve to take no Pleaſures, except ſuch as grow within the barren Territories of Reaſon?

SOCRATES.

THE prevailing Force of your perſuaſive Eloquence almoſt tempts me to partake with you the Glory of this Adventure, and to explore under your auſpicious Conduct theſe undiſcovered Lands of Bliſs. The fearleſs Veſſel, impatient of Reſtraint, ſpreads its opening Sails to every wanton Gale, and ſeems to ſcorn the Shoar, and court the Dangers of the unknown Ocean. But ſay, is it not Deſire that ſits at the Helm, and uſurps the Office of the Pilot?

PHILEBUS.

Can you wiſh a Pilot guided by a more unerring Inſtinct to the Harbour?

SOCRATES.

DESIRE will doubtleſs ſteer towards its Port: But are there not various Deſires, tending to Ports as various?

PHILEBUS.

IT muſt be confeſſed that our Deſires are various, as the Objects exciting them, and tend to widely different Ends.

SOCRATES.

THESE Deſires, if I miſtake not, are the Mariners, diſperſed up and down in ſo great

Numbers, ſome of them appearing openly on the Decks, others remaining cloſely concealed within the innermoſt Apartments of the Veſſel.

PHILEBUS.

THESE Mariners are, I confeſs, pretty numerous.

SOCRATES.

AND is it indifferent, which of theſe numerous Mariners is placed at the Helm? Or has any One of them a Right to be preferred before his Fellows?

PHILEBUS.

THEY are, each of them, perfectly well qualified to diſcharge the Office of a Pilot, and may indifferently ſupply it by Turns.

SOCRATES.

SO fierce and turbulent a Crew, each of them affecting to ſteer a different Courſe, and laying an equal Claim to the Helm, promiſe a very unſafe and unſteddy Navigation. The Direction of theſe contending Pilots will be various and uncertain as the Winds and Waves; and even when the Seas are calm, they may periſh by Storms ariſing amongſt themſelves.

PHILEBUS.

THE leading Deſire will always have ſufficient Power to prevent ſuch fatal Diſorders.

SOCRATES.

THE leading Deſire, I preſume, is the ſtrongeſt; ſince the Helm will be too warmly

warmly diſputed to be willingly reſigned.

PHILEBUS.

POWER is the ſureſt Foundation of Government.

SOCRATES.

THERE muſt, I fear, be frequent Murmurs and Factions in ſuch a Government. Will not the weaker Deſires ſometimes gather new Strength, and conſpire to depoſe a Tyrant, who forces them to ſubmit to ſo rigorous a Confinement?

PHILEBUS.

SUCH Revolutions frequently happen in the Empire of Deſire.

SOCRATES.

WE can then have ſmall Hope of ever arriving at Happineſs, under the Conduct of ſuch Pilots; ſince that Happineſs muſt perpetually be diſturbed by ſuch uneaſy Reſtraints and Perplexities, as you have juſtly obſerved to be inconſiſtent with the Enjoyment of it.

PHILEBUS.

THE vaſt Variety of deſirable Objects perhaps renders ſome Degrees of Reſtraint and Perplexity unavoidable.

SOCRATES.

IF the Reſtraint of our Deſires be proportionable to the Number and the Force of Objects, thus dividing and perplexing them, it muſt be very conſtant and very ſevere. You have therefore unjuſtly accuſed me, of

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an envious Deſign to reſtrain you from enjoying the Pleaſures Nature has kindly provided for you, ſince the Accuſation returns more ſtrongly on yourſelf. It is you, who, like an ungrateful Gueſt, cenſure the rich and luxurious Feaſt ſhe invites you to, and complain of her too laviſh Bounty, which has cauſed ſo many grievous Reſtraints by exciting oppoſite and interfering Deſires, and ſpitefully perplexed your Enjoyments by contriving ſuch an infinite Multiplicity of Delights.

PHILEBUS.

I KNOW not by what Artifice you have led me to a Concluſion, ſo very remote from my own Sentiments: But, ſuppoſing me obliged to admit this invidious Conſequence, how can you eſcape the ſame Imputation, unleſs you can propoſe a Method of avoiding theſe Inconveniencies ariſing from the various Bounty of Nature?

SOCRATES.

THERE can be no Difficulty in vindicating the Bleſſings of her liberal Hand from the Inconveniencies occaſioned by the Abuſe of them. Theſe uneaſy Reſtraints are owing to the barbarous Uſurpation of violent and unjuſt Deſires, exerciſing a tyrannical Dominion over their Brethren, and denying them thoſe juſt and innocent Gratifications, they might each of them enjoy under a milder Government.

PHI-

PHILEBUS.

IT is an unexpected Favour from you, ſo far to eſpouſe their Intereſts, and take them into your Protection; but they would perhaps think themſelves more obliged to you, if you would indulge them in an entire Freedom from any Government at all.

SOCRATES.

IT was an Anarchy of the Deſires, which unavoidably ſubjected them to the Miſeries of mutual Oppreſſion and Tyrannical Uſurpation: and for theſe Evils there can be found no Relief, beſides the gentle Sway and tender Protection of their common Parent and rightful Sovereign.

PHILEBUS.

AND where can you point out to them this kind Parent, and generous Protector, to whom you would have them pay their Homage?

SOCRATES.

AS lawleſs a Race as they are, they cannot be at a loſs, to whom they owe their Submiſſion and Obedience. But in order to diſcover more plainly, where this juſt Authority is ſeated, it will be neceſſary to point out the Source of the Confuſion, by which our tumultuous Deſires are thus enflamed and divided. Does this doubtful Perplexity ariſe from Variety, or from Unskilfulneſs?

PHI-

PHILEBUS.

PERHAPS theſe Cauſes may both combine in producing it.

SOCRATES.

IGNORANCE, you will allow, might be embarraſſed in its Choice, were the Objects of Deſire ever ſo few.

PHILEBUS.

UNCERTAINTY is indeed the Companion of Ignorance.

SOCRATES.

AND perfect Knowledge can without Confuſion ſelect from the greateſt Variety the Object moſt approved.

PHILEBUS.

THE Power of diſtinguiſhing, and ſelecting from innumerable Objects the moſt eligible, is the peculiar Prerogative of Knowledge: But admitting that Knowledge could remove every Degree of Perplexity, it muſt ſtill remain an inflexible Cauſe of Reſtraint.

SOCRATES.

AS Knowledge is the Parent of Liberty and Happineſs, ſo the Reſtraints ariſing from it are conſiſtent with theſe Ends, and even contribute to produce them: Theſe Reſtraints muſt therefore not only be perfectly voluntary, but even deſirable.

PHILEBUS.

I AM pleaſed to ſee you engaged in maintaining ſuch a Complication of Inconſiſtencies, and promiſe my ſelf much Diverſion

in obſerving the Dexterity you will ſhew in reconciling them. But do you ſeriouſly undertake to reconcile Reſtraint with Liberty, and even to prove the moſt grievous of all Reſtraints, that of the Deſires, to be itſelf deſirable?

SOCRATES.

I DID not imagine a willing or a pleaſing Reſtraint would have appeared ſo great a Paradox to you, who have been accuſtomed to hear Lovers bleſs their Chains, and call their Bondage Happineſs.

PHILEBUS.

A LOVER (by the Indulgence of the Fair) is allowed the Privilege of forming ſuch myſterious and unintelligible Notions, as would be inſufferable in a Philoſopher. Theſe little Extravagances may perhaps be thought pretty in a Sonnet, but they would look monſtrous in a Syſtem. You could not, I hope, think me capable of being ſo far deceived by this Logic of Lovers, as to admit ſuch wild Inconſiſtences upon their Authority.

SOCRATES.

I BELIEVE you will not only admit, but even maintain them, if you will be true to your own Judgment.

PHILEBUS.

I HAVE no Temptation to diſown my Sentiments on this Subject.

SOCRATES.

TELL me then ſincerely, had you the Privilege of chooſing a certain Number out of an Heap of Pearls or Diamonds; would you not be deſirous to know which of them were the moſt valuable?

PHILEBUS.

I SHOULD take it as a Favour to be informed.

SOCRATES.

AND yet you would I ſuppoſe be confined in your Choice by that Knowledge.

PHILEBUS.

SUCH Confinement, I own, is not involuntary.

SOCRATES.

IF inſtead of the Pearls and Diamonds, I had preſented to you a Basket of Flowers or Fruits on the ſame Conditions; would the Skill of the Floriſt or the Gardener have been undeſirable? Or would you have felt any uneaſineſs in governing your Choice by it?

PHILEBUS.

IT muſt have been the Effect of ſome Remains of Ignorance or Doubtfulneſs, not of Knowledge, if I had ſubmitted with Reluctancy to make a right Choice

SOCRATES.

IF then the Basket of Fruits or Flowers were transformed, by the Imagination of a Poet, to ſome beautiful Machine, exhibiting all

all the various Pleaſures the Powers of Nature or of Fancy can produce; would it be any Diſadvantage to poſſeſs a Perfection of Knowledge, enabling us to ſelect from this agreeable Repreſentation whatever was moſt eligible? Or ſhould we find any Uneaſineſs in the willing Reſtraint it would lay us under, when the doubtful Shades of Error and Ignorance were thus removed by it?

PHILEBUS.

SUCH Knowledge muſt be confeſſed to be very deſirable, and the Reſtraint reſulting from it to be perfectly voluntary, and conſiſtent with Liberty and Happineſs; ſince, if it could be attained, the Crowd of irregular Deſires would vaniſh, with the falſe Opinions that gave Birth to them, like Shadows at the approaching Light, and no Reſiſtance would be made to the Government of Reaſon. But whilſt theſe Deſires ſubſiſt in their full Strength, you muſt not expect their Submiſſion to that Shadow of Reaſon, which ſo weakly pretends to govern them.

SOCRATES.

THE Inability of Reaſon to introduce Liberty and Happineſs, by the Government of the Deſires, is owing to the Mixtures of Error and Ignorance with which it is allayed: And if ſuch would be the happy Effect of perfect Knowledge, every leſſer Degree of it muſt have the ſame Tendency.

And ſince the Knowledge of Pleaſures can only ſet us free from thoſe Uneaſineſſes of Perplexity and Reſtraint, which indiſpoſe the Mind for every Enjoyment, and render it incapable of taſting true Delight, muſt not this Knowledge be a neceſſary Branch of the Science of Happineſs?

PHILEBUS.

I SHOULD not perhaps have thought the Neceſſity of it worth diſputing, had you not artfully multiplied the Objects of it, by repreſenting them under the Emblem of Flowers, far more numerous I fear, and of more various Kinds, than the Pleaſures they were made to repreſent. This Imaginary Encreaſe of their Numbers, I own made the Knowledge of them appear to me too burthenſome for the Underſtanding of a Man of Pleaſure.

SOCRATES.

IT ſeems that you have been a little inexact in computing the Sum of thoſe Pleaſures, in which you are eſteemed ſo skilful, if you think they do not far exceed the Flowers in Number. Theſe are only an inconſiderable Part of the pleaſing Objects of Sight; and, beſides this Senſe, we have ſeveral other Senſes, and other Faculties, each of them formed to receive an incomprehenſible Variety of Pleaſures.

PHI-

PHILEBUS.

I COULD with great Eaſe let you into a perfect Knowledge of them; but, ſince they are ſo vaſtly numerous, the Time will not permit me to enter upon ſo inexhauſtible a Subject.

SOCRATES.

How happy ſhould I be in taking ſuch a Review of them with you! But ſince their Multitude forbids ſo nice and accurate a Survey, you may at leaſt favour me ſo far, as to point out their ſeveral Kinds, and to range them in their different Tribes.

PHILEBUS.

THIS is an eaſy Task, and might be ſoon diſpatched; but it would be too dry and methodical to proceed from Senſe to Senſe, and to recount them in Order. It may ſuffice to mention ſome of the Pleaſures of the nobler Senſes; the reſt you will eaſily trace out by your ſelf at Leiſure.

SOCRATES.

A TRUE and genuine Lover of Pleaſure, like a Lover of Beauty, who finds a Charm in Nymphs of every Shape and Complexion, eſteems every Pleaſure precious and deſirable; and leaves none even of the meaner Kinds neglected or untaſted. Let me therefore entreat you, that we may not do any thing ſo unworthy of our generous Paſſion for Pleaſure, as to omit the leaſt of its Charms. But, ſince it would be too burthenſome

to

to you to recount them all, permit me to attempt deſcribing the meaneſt of them in your Preſence, reſerving thoſe of the nobler Kinds to be adorned by your ſuperior Genius.

PHILEBUS.

YOU may ſafely chuſe the humbler Theme, ſince your Eloquence will be the more diſplayed in rendering it agreeable.

SOCRATES.

THE meaneſt Pleaſures, I ſuppoſe, you will allow to be thoſe that have in them the greateſt Mixtures of Pain and Uneaſineſs.

PHILEBUS.

THESE ſcarce ſeem to deſerve the Name of Pleaſures.

SOCRATES.

THERE are ſome of them, which it ſeems very improperly, though not unuſually, applied to. Do you think, for Inſtance, that meer Inſenſibility can be rightly called a Pleaſure?

PHILEBUS.

I THINK the Name of Pleaſure would be profaned, if applied to any thing ſo contemptible.

SOCRATES.

AND yet, to Perſons in extreme Pain, Inſenſibility appears a very great Pleaſure.

PHILEBUS.

THIS is an Error, not much unlike the frequent Deceptions in Opticks, cauſed by

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viewing Objects through a wrong Medium, or from a falſe Point of View.

SOCRATES.

IF Imaginary Pleaſures may thus be made to appear Real, you cannot wonder that Real Pleaſures may be variouſly magnified or diminiſhed by the like Artifices.

PHILEBUS.

THE Deception in all ſuch Caſes is no leſs evident.

SOCRATES.

WE are then liable to form very falſe Judgments of them, unleſs we make a proper Allowance for ſuch deceitful Appearances.

PHILEBUS.

THE Errors of our Judgment, without this Precaution, would be very prepoſterous.

SOCRATES.

THIS Obſervation may ſufficiently be confirmed by inſtancing in the Senſations of Taſte. Theſe Senſations are doubtleſs real and poſitive Pleaſures; but they are made to ſeem much more intenſe than they really are, by the inflaming Appetites annexed to them; the Deception of which is ſo very ſtrong, that the ſimple Element of Water, however taſteleſs to a cooler Palate, yet ſeems to aſſume a moſt agreeable Flavour, when preferred to allay a burning Thirſt.

PHI-

PHILEBUS.

I PERCEIVE too late the Tendency of your Argument: You do not, I hope, think theſe Pleaſures deſpicable?

SOCRATES.

IT is not my deſign to derogate from theſe uſeful Senſations, by which Life itſelf is ſuſtained. Who can ſufficiently admire the Structure of this curious Organ of Senſe, formed to diſtinguiſh all the Varieties of proper Nouriſhment, and directing us to a due Proportion of it by the Admonition of grateful Senſations, ſo juſtly regulated, as to diminiſh in Delightfulneſs, as we approach towards Satiety, and to correct Exceſs by becoming at length diſtaſteful! Their End attained, they leave the Mind unmoleſted for a convenient Interval, deſigned to be filled up with nobler Delights; from whence they again gently recall our Thoughts by gradually encreaſing Appetites, at the ſeaſonable Hour of Repaſt. So wonderfully exquiſite is the Mechaniſm of all the Senſes and Faculties; thoſe uſeful Inſtruments, mutually aſſiſting, not interfering with each other in their Motions, unleſs their Harmony be diſturbed by the unskilful Uſe of them, and all of them contributing, if rightly employed, to the Advancement of our Happineſs.

PHILEBUS.

I SHALL greatly applaud your ſuperiour Skill in the Science of Happineſs, if yo

you can inſtruct us how to fill up with the few exquiſite Delights, excelling thoſe of Taſte, thoſe vacant Intervals, which the ſparing Hand of Nature has ſo thinly ſown with Pleaſures.

SOCRATES.

IT is your Part to inſtruct us in theſe nobler Pleaſures; I am only engaged to deſcribe thoſe of an Inferior Kind.

PHILEBUS.

YOU cannot expect from me an Account of more, or better Pleaſures, than Nature has kindly furniſhed us with; and thoſe, ſuch as they are, I ſhall willingly unfold to you: But tell me firſt, are there not more of theſe, which you are pleaſed to call Inferior Pleaſures, ſtill remaining unexplained by you?

SOCRATES.

THERE are a Few, of a light and frivolous Kind, which ſeem to owe their Sweetneſs to the Uneaſineſſes of Deſire with which they are embittered: But ſince their Nature may be ſufficiently underſtood by thoſe already explained, it will be needleſs to give a particular Account of them.

PHILEBUS.

I WILL not tempt you to be guilty of an Omiſſion, ſo unworthy of your generous Paſſion for Pleaſure, by admitting your Excuſe.

SOCRATES.

IF you have ever heard the tender Complaints breathed in the *Arcadian* Woods, or pitied the wounded Shepherds languiſhing in every fragrant Shade; if you have ever ſeen the gentle Smiles, or ſuffered by the Cruelty of the Shepherdeſſes; you cannot be a Stranger to theſe fantaſtick Pains and Pleaſures, ſo much abounding in Fiction, that they need a Poet to deſcribe them.

PHILEBUS.

YOU have deſerved the Thanks of the Company, together with mine, by finiſhing in ſo happy a Manner the Part you had allotted to me in the Converſation. But why did you thus circumvent me by an inſidious Propoſal to deſcribe the meaneſt Pleaſures, when you had the very nobleſt in View? Why this ſeeming Contempt of thoſe tranſporting Joys, you feigned yourſelf willing to have paſſed over in Silence? Why this diſingenuous Artifice? Was it deſigned to deprive me of the Advantage of a beautiful Deſcription, or of a prevailing Argument?

SOCRATES.

I AM ſurpriſed at this groundleſs Accuſation, deſigned, I fear, to mock my artleſs Simplicity. How juſtly might you have reſented the Affront, had I diſcovered the leaſt ſuſpicion of your giving the Preference to theſe lower Delights, or envying me the humble Task of deſcribing them; when

when ſo many fruitful Fields of nobler Pleaſures, ſo many rich Harveſts of more exalted Joys, remain untouched, and reſerved entire for the Honour of your Deſcription ?

PHILEBUS.

YOUR Manner of Irony is extremely pleaſant; but ſince you purſue it ſo far, I may juſtly call upon you to ſhew, where theſe imaginary Harveſts riſe, and in what fruitful Fields they grow. This, I preſume, is what you will deſire to be excuſed from, well knowing the Impoſſibility of anſwering ſuch a Demand. For alas! What faint and empty Delights do the remaining Senſes yield ? They may indeed entertain us with the fading Sweets of Pinks or Violets, the little Amuſements of Sounds or Colours, or ſome ſuch trifling Senſations, ſcarce deſerving the Name of Pleaſures : But are theſe the refined Enjoyments deſigned by Nature to fill up the long and tedious Intervals, left void of more ſubſtantial Delights ? Are theſe the exalted Themes, kindly reſerved for me to celebrate ?

SOCRATES.

I MAY perhaps point out to you a richer Source of Pleaſures, and lend you a more exalted Theme, more worthy of your Eloquence: But you muſt allow that even theſe Pleaſures are pure of Pain, and owe their Charms to no uneaſy Appetites; and conſequently

ſequently are more excellent than thoſe you prefer to them.

PHILEBUS.

THEY are indeed ſo very indifferent to us, that their Abſence can give us little Cauſe of Uneaſineſs.

SOCRATES.

THIS ſeeming Indifference is merely owing to our Inattention to them. As it has been obſerved that even the ſmalleſt Pleaſures may ſeem very intenſe, when placed in Oppoſition to Pains; ſo even very great Pleaſures may appear faint, when wanting thoſe Shades to encreaſe their Luſtre. But theſe you have acknowledged, in both Caſes, to be Deceptions.

PHILEBUS.

IF the Deception be pleaſing, let me ever be deceived.

SOCRATES.

IT might be replied that pleaſing Errors are commonly overballanced by the Pains attending them: But here the Deception is not friendly to Pleaſure, but has a quite contrary Effect, and ſerves only to leſſen the Force and Livelineſs of it. I may therefore hope that you will be agreeably undeceived by obſerving, that our Inattention to theſe refined and unmixed Pleaſures is farther increaſed by the conſtant Succeſſion of them, paſſing almoſt inſenſibly before the Mind, and often eſcaping our Obſervation. The Organs

of

of theſe pure Ethereal Senſes, not confined in their nobler Powers and Capacities, like thoſe of a groſſer Make, are exempted from Wearineſs or Satiety; and are on Account of this very Excellency diſregarded by Perſons of little Reflection, becauſe they have the unvaluable Privilege of ſupplying perpetual Delights. But were you to judge of the little Amuſements of Sounds or Colours (as you are pleaſed to call them) by the Tranſports they afford to an Eye or an Ear newly opened, you would make a very different Eſtimate of their Value: And, were thoſe minute Grains of Pleaſure they afford, as inconſiderable as our Inadvertency makes them appear to us; yet even on this Suppoſition, they would amount to an immenſe Sum of Happineſs, ſince their Smallneſs would be more than compenſated by their Number.

PHILEBUS.

It is ſufficient to render theſe Pleaſures of little Value, that Experience ſhews them to be faint and languid: We may be excuſed from enquiring into the Cauſes, why they ſtrike ſo feebly on our dull and unregarding Senſes.

SOCRATES.

It is no wonder the Fair complain ſo much of your Inconſtancy, ſince the Dullneſs of your Senſe (or Fancy) is ſuch, that Happineſs it ſelf, if perpetual and uninterrupted,

rupted, would ceaſe to give you Delight. But, to proceed in recounting the Advantages of theſe nobler Senſes: Their various Objects perpetually ſurround us, excuſing a laborious Search; ———

PHILEBUS

SUCH cheap Pleaſures cannot but be highly eſteemed.

SOCRATES.

— NOT impaired by our Enjoyment, ——

PHILEBUS.

SUCH ſlender Enjoyments muſt certainly be innocent.

SOCRATES.

— NOR requiring Property or Encloſure.

PHILEBUS.

SUCH Treaſures are ſecure from Theft.

SOCRATES.

HENCE they expoſe us to no Danger of Injuſtice or Intemperance.

PHILEBUS.

YOU might have added, —— to no Temptation.

SOCRATES.

THEY raiſe no Tumults in our Breaſts by fallacious Hopes, or by fierce and turbulent Deſires;

PHILEBUS.

WANTING the Power to excite ſuch pleaſing Paſſions.

SOCRATES.

NOR kindle Diſcord and Contention in Human Societies.

PHILEBUS.

NOT being, it ſeems, worth contending for.

SOCRATES.

I AM contented, in Favour of the Conceſſions you have been obliged to make, to paſs by the little Reflections, with which you have thought fit to ſoften the Reluctancy of aſſenting to thoſe Truths, you would not perhaps have owned ſo willingly, could they with any Colour have been denied. I only obſerve in general, that the contrary Qualities to theſe aſcribed to purer Pleaſures, belong to the Pleaſures you ſo unjuſtly prefer to them. You may ſecurely boaſt (if you can think ſuch Advantages worthy to be boaſted of) that the Objects of your Favourite Pleaſures are purchaſed with Labour, and preſerved with anxious Care; that they are coveted with inextinguiſhable Deſire, and periſh in the Enjoyment; not without revenging themſelves on their too rapacious Deſtroyers; rendring them odious and contemptible by the Deformities of Intemperance and Injuſtice, and deſervedly miſerable by the mutual Evils produced by Strife and Diſcord. Thus by a low Attachment to thoſe ignoble Delights, the Herd of Mankind, like Creatures prone to Paſture, and

refuſing to lift their Eyes to the nobler Enjoyments deſigned for them by the Bounty of Divine Wiſdom, mix in the Madneſs of horrid Wars and Contentions, puſhing with Horns of Iron, and devouring each other, and with more than brutal Fury trampling beneath their Feet, and deſtroying that Happineſs, they purſue with the Violence of ſuch pernicious and inſatiable Deſires.

PHILEBUS.

THIS univerſal Conſent of Nations, in contending for the Objects of theſe Pleaſures, ſhews they all agree in placing their Happineſs in them: And have you the Confidence to appeal from the Judgment of Mankind?

SOCRATES.

I MAY juſtly appeal from the Judgment of the Unskilful: And, that the Generality of Mankind are unskilful, it appears too plainly from their being unhappy; ſince their Miſery is owing to the miſtaken Uſe of the Means which Nature made ſufficient for their Happineſs.

PHILEBUS.

IT is barbarous thus to inſult the Miſeries of Mankind, by imputing to their Folly the Evils ſo plainly owing to their Misfortune. How bountiful ſo ever Nature may have been, it is undeniable that the Means of Happineſs are wanting to Multitudes; and that their Miſery is owing to this Want alone

is

is manifeſt, ſince all who are ſo fortunate as to poſſeſs a plentiful Portion of them, are by all allowed to be happy.

SOCRATES.

I AM ſo far from allowing it, that unleſs their Knowledge be proportionable to their Poſſeſſions, I am convinced by frequent Examples, that they hardly ever avoid making themſelves even the more unhappy, by the Miſapplication of them.

PHILEBUS.

SURPRISING! you will not perhaps allow the *Perſian* Emperor to be happy.

SOCRATES.

IT is not poſſible for me to judge of his Happineſs, unleſs I had the Honour of ſo near an Acceſs to him, that I might acquaint my ſelf with his Wiſdom. The Deference due to ſo great a Monarch, from me who am placed at an humble diſtance from Greatneſs, makes me wiſh you had made choice of ſome more familiar Inſtance, more within the Sphere of my Obſervation.

PHILEBUS.

THIS Deference ought methinks to have made you acknowledge his ſuperior Wiſdom, without being admitted to ſo diſtinguiſhing a Proof of it.

SOCRATES.

YOUR manner of arguing implies that, if you had propoſed as a Model of Happineſs ſome wealthy Ruſtic, who ploughs a

large Extent of fruitful Ground, and feeds a numerous Flock, you would have thought me obliged, in mere Civility, to infer that his Wiſdom muſt be equal to his Poſſeſſions.

PHILEBUS.

SUCH a Compliment to him would have been ſo far from my Expectation, that Ruſticity implies, in my Eſteem, the groſſeſt Ignorance, rather than the leaſt Degree of Wiſdom.

SOCRATES.

I KNOW no juſt Foundation for ſuch a Prejudice againſt the Followers of Agriculture; an Employment highly eſteemed in ancient Times, for its Dignity and Ingenuity.

PHILEBUS.

IT is evident that the conſtant Attendance on ſuch a laborious Occupation leaves them neither the Leiſure, nor the Inclination to acquire Knowledge.

SOCRATES.

AND are Nations then governed with greater Eaſe than Flocks or Herds? Or do the Cares and Glories of the *Perſian* Empire, conſiſting of ſo many Provinces, afford more Leiſure or Inclination for the acquiring of Knowledge, than the Culture of a few Acres, or the unlaborious Employment of the Shepherd, hourly converſing with his Country Muſe, and inſtructing the

the attentive Woods in the Charms of Innocence?

PHILEBUS.

ACCORDING to your Reaſoning, a Prince muſt be inferior in Knowledge to the meaneſt of his Subjects.

SOCRATES.

THE Reaſoning depends on the Obſervation it is built upon, and that is entirely your own. I maintain, on the contrary, that no Part of Mankind, from the *Perſian* Emperor to the meaneſt Ruſtic, are excluded from a competent Degree of Knowledge, if they have the Wiſdom to value it above all their other Poſſeſſions.

PHILEBUS.

TO what obſcure Cell do you owe this empty Dream of the immenſe Value of Knowledge? Believe me, had you better known the World, you would have entertained far meaner Thoughts of it, than to have eſteemed it worthy of the Ambition of Princes. But, ſhould we allow the Knowledge of Pleaſures not to be beneath their Notice, what Depth of Underſtanding can this eaſy Branch of Science require? or, Who can be thought to have a more extenſive Experience of it than thoſe who can ſo eaſily command all the Variety of Pleaſures the Earth affords? And are not even thoſe Pleaſures you ſo extravagantly recommend, as obvious as the Light and Colours they reſult from?

SOCRATES.

IF I have mentioned the innocent Pleaſures of Sight, it was only to give you a faint Shadow or Image of thoſe, to which it bears an imperfect Analogy and Reſemblance; Pleaſures far exceeding thoſe of Senſe, and far too excellent to be attained without a diligent and curious Search.

PHILEBUS.

THE Search I fear will be too curious for me, though accuſtomed to the Chaſe, and experienced in ſurveying the Fields of Pleaſure, to diſcover the leaſt Traces of them, unleſs you lend me your Aſſiſtance, by pointing out the thorny Brake in the Obſcurities of which they lie concealed.

SOCRATES.

THE Pleaſures of Senſe are common to us with the Brutes; and it is no Wonder, if thoſe of an higher kind eſcape our Obſervation, ſo long as we are wholly engaged in the promiſcuous Purſuits not exceeding their Sagacity: But are there no Pleaſures peculiar to our ſuperior Nature, none which they cannot partake with us?

PHILEBUS.

IT is methinks unbecoming a Philoſopher to caſt ſuch an unſeemly Reflection on the Pleaſures of the Human kind, by comparing them with thoſe of Brutes. But if you inſiſt on an Anſwer to a Queſtion ſo unworthy of your Politeneſs, I muſt fairly own, I am

not

not conſcious of any Pleaſures which they do not partake with us, I preſume in a far inferior Degree.

SOCRATES.

You in vain endeavour to transfer to my Queſtion the unbecoming Reflection on Human Nature, ſo ſtrongly implied in your Anſwer. But have we then no Faculty, which diſtinguiſhes us from the Brutes? Or is that Faculty ſo very different from all the others, as not to be ſuſceptible of Pleaſure?

PHILEBUS.

THE Power of Reaſon is the boaſted Privilege we enjoy above the Brutes: But is it then this irreconcileable Enemy of Pleaſure, ſo conſtant in depretiating its Value, ſo diligent in fruſtrating its Enticements, ſo officious in preventing its Purſuit, ſo unwelcome in diſturbing its Enjoyment, ſo importunate in forewarning us of its Conſequences, and ſo inexorable in reproaching us with its Exceſſes; is it this dangerous Faculty, the Poſſeſſion of which has proved an Occaſion of Guilt and Unhappineſs to ſuch Multitudes of Intelligent Beings, and its Abſence a Security from taſting or deſerving Miſery to all the Tribes of Irrational Creatures; is it this Fountain of Bitterneſs, which you would point out to us, as the Source of theſe new and unknown Pleaſures, ſo far excelling thoſe of Senſe; theſe refined

refined Enjoyments, not to be profaned by the innocent Creatures we ſo much deſpiſe? This is too abſurd to be maintained as a ſerious Doctrine; but if you are ſo extravagantly inclined to Mirth and Pleaſantry, as to advance ſo new an Opinion, you will entertain us with a moſt agreeable Comedy. It brings to my Remembrance a pleaſant Adventure, which happened to one of your Brethren of the Academy, who was engaged in a like chimerical Attempt. I ſee, I have raiſed your Curioſity; and if you will pardon the Digreſſion, I will relate it as a Warning to you.

SOCRATES.

IT may perhaps enliven the Converſation.

PHILEBUS.

A PHILOSOPHER, too deeply engaged in Speculation, purſued his Walk in an unfrequented Foreſt, till he found himſelf amidſt a General Diet of the Beaſts, which had been ſummoned to the Election of a King. Though he was not allowed the Privilege of a Vote, he had the Honour to be introduced to the new elected Monarch, by whom he was graciouſly received; but, in making his Compliment, he had the Imprudence to drop an Expreſſion, intimating the Superiority of Mankind to the States there in Parliament aſſembled. An indignant Murmur was inſtantly heard to reſound through the enraged Foreſt; but was ſoon repreſ-

repreſſed by the moſt ſerene Sovereign of the Woods, whoſe awful Brow commanded Silence. He ordered the Queſtion to be fairly debated; and, as ſecure of Victory, in Contempt of the Indignity offered to himſelf and his Subjects, he appointed the dulleſt amongſt all the Animals to undertake the Diſpute with this uncourteous Stranger. The Audience compoſed themſelves to Attention with the decent Order and Regularity of an Univerſity; and the Regius Profeſſor mounted the Chair with a becoming Gravity. The Iſſue of the Controverſy may eaſily be foreſeen; the trembling Philoſopher modeſtly inſinuated, with the Tenderneſs due to the venerable Ears of the learned Profeſſor, a Variety of Arguments, which received an unanſwerable Reply; and was at length reduced to Shame and Silence. The generous Lion, not without much Difficulty, prevented his being torn in pieces; a Fate, which a like Offender, tho' perhaps guilty of maintaining ſome far leſs unſeaſonable Truth, would hardly have eſcaped in an Human Synod, even though he had produced a Safe-conduct from a more powerful Prince: And, on his Promiſe to write a fair Account of the Conference, he was diſmiſſed with an Eſcorte of Panthers, who conducted him with great Civility to the Verge of the Foreſt. The Adventure appearing not unplea-

pleaſant, when the Terror of it was paſſed, he had the Wit to keep his Word; and by that means obliged the World with a very entertaining Piece.

SOCRATES.

IF ſuch a Diſputant was favourably heard, in the Defence of a Theſis agreeable to the Inclinations of the Brute-Aſſembly; I may juſtly promiſe my ſelf equal Succeſs from this Audience, in maintaining an Opinion no leſs ſuitable to Perſons of diſtinguiſhed Elegance and Politeneſs.

BUT whence can Reaſon be concluded to be ſuch an irreconcileable Enemy to Pleaſure? Is it becauſe it reſtrains us from Pleaſures over-balanced with Pains?

PHILEBUS.

THE Severity of its Reſtraint ſhews more of Enmity than of Caution.

SOCRATES.

REASON is then an Enemy of Pain; and Pain and Pleaſure are of oppoſite Factions.

PHILEBUS.

THEY are, I confeſs, irreconcileable Enemies.

SOCRATES.

AN Enemy to Pain ſhould then, methinks, be looked upon, as a faithful Friend and Ally of Pleaſure. And, if we trace the Origin of Pleaſures, it will perhaps be found not only a Friend, but even a Parent to them,

them, ſince we are obliged to the Power of Reaſon for their Production. You will, I ſuppoſe, admit, that they reſult from a certain Symmetry, or Suitableneſs of Objects to the Organs of Senſe.

PHILEBUS.

THIS mutual Symmetry between the Object and the Organ, is indeed neceſſary to the Birth of Pleaſure.

SOCRATES.

THE Organs and their correſponding Objects are, each of them, equally curious, and diſcover in their Make and Texture the moſt exquiſite Art and Contrivance.

PHILEBUS.

THE various Wonders of Art employed on them cannot be ſufficiently admired.

SOCRATES.

IF they are the Productions of Art and Contrivance, Reaſon is the Parent of Pleaſures. And can it then be thought an Enemy to its tender Off-ſpring? Can it delight in deſtroying its own Works, and in defeating its own Deſigns?

PHILEBUS.

IF Pleaſures are originally the Productions of Reaſon, it ſeems the proper Office of the Underſtanding to be ſubſervient to the Senſes, in contriving to ſupply them with theſe Productions, in the greateſt Numbers, and of the moſt excellent Kinds: But this is a Task it may be perfectly qualified to

diſcharge, though it be itſelf entirely void of Pleaſure, and incapable of the leaſt Impreſſions of it.

SOCRATES.

THE Senſes muſt then be nobler Powers than the Underſtanding, if it was only formed for the ſervile Employment of miniſtring to their various Pleaſures, and was itſelf incapable of taſting a peculiar Delight of a ſuperior Kind, agreeable to its more excellent Nature.

PHILEBUS.

I APPREHEND no Inconvenience in this Conſequence, and ſhould be glad to ſee it well eſtabliſhed.

SOCRATES.

PERMIT me at leaſt to lament the Indignity offered to this noble Faculty, in thus degrading and depriving it of its Supremacy: But hard as it is, this ſeems to be its juſt Lot, if it be not ſuſceptible of Pleaſure. Happineſs is the great End, to which every Faculty is ſubſervient: And its Subſerviency to this End is the Meaſure of its Excellence. Happineſs conſiſts of Pleaſures; and, if there are no other Pleaſures, it muſt conſiſt of thoſe of Senſe alone. The Senſes muſt then be the immediate Inſtruments of Happineſs; and to theſe the Underſtanding muſt be ſubſervient and ſubordinate. But if, on the contrary, the Underſtanding has an immenſe Variety of Pleaſures peculiarly belonging to it-

itſelf, infinitely ſurpaſſing thoſe of the Senſes, and conſtituting far the moſt valuable Part of Happineſs; the Underſtanding may then be reſtored to its Superiority with the higheſt Juſtice and Honour, and every inferior Faculty reduced to a juſt Subordination.

PHILEBUS.

IF the Underſtanding were capable of affording ſuch delightful Entertainment, it might juſtly claim this Superiority; which, according to the Meaſure of Excellence you have eſtabliſhed, can only be attributed to the Senſes; ſince the Capacity of Pleaſure is a Privilege peculiarly belonging to them. Had you the Power of opening a new Senſe in my Mind, you might then give me a Notion of this new Set of Pleaſures, which ſeem to me ſo incomprehenſible: But the Underſtanding is a Faculty ſo very different from the Senſes, that it cannot be conceived to have been, like them, formed for an Inſtrument of Pleaſure.

SOCRATES.

THE Senſes are different from each other: But does the want of Reſemblance deſtroy the Reality of the ſeveral Kinds of Pleaſure reſulting from them? Has the Eye no Capacity of Pleaſure, becauſe it wants the Perception of Taſtes? Or is the Ear void of Delight, becauſe it is inſenſible of Smells?

PHILEBUS.

THESE various Senſations I allow to be Pleaſures, though of different Kinds: But do you not apprehend that the difference between the Underſtanding and the Senſes is much greater than that between the Senſes themſelves?

SOCRATES.

THE Senſe of Sight has a much nearer Affinity to the Underſtanding than the other Senſes, and more reſembles it in its pleaſing Powers. Its Objects affect the Mind much in the ſame manner, as it is affected by its own Ideas: the Pleaſures ariſing from the ſenſible Object, and from the Intellectual Idea, are each of them of the like Nature, conſiſting merely in Viſion or Intuition, and ariſing from the ſimple Repreſentation of Images or Pictures exibited to the Eye, or to the Mind. And what difficulty can there then be in admitting the ſuperior Power of Perception in the Underſtanding, ſo much reſembling Sight, to afford a ſuperior Set of Pleaſures, reſembling the Pleaſures of Sight?

PHILEBUS..

I DO not apprehend mere Perception to be Pleaſure.

SOCRATES.

IT is not mere Perception, but the Perception of agreeable Objects, which is attended with Pleaſure. And are the Objects

of

of the Underſtanding leſs agreeable than thoſe of Sight? Does Light afford a more agreeable Entertainment to the Mind than Knowledge? Or do Colours boaſt a Variety more gay and pleaſing than Thought?

PHILEBUS.

WERE the Objects of the Underſtanding ever ſo agreeable, ſo faint a Perception of them would produce a mere ſhadow of Pleaſure.

SOCRATES.

THE Perceptive Powers of the Underſtanding muſt be allowed infinitely to excel thoſe of the Senſes, in many Reſpects. By the Former, Objects are painted as they are in themſelves; by the Latter, they are repreſented under falſe Appearances. The Qualities diſcovered in them by the Former are ſuch only as are really inherent in them; thoſe diffuſed over them by the Latter are imaginary and deluſive. The Ideas of the Former are permanent and invariable, and conſtantly the ſame throughout all the Worlds of Minds: The Senſations of the Latter are fleeting and changeable, and are endleſsly diverſified by the various Formation of the Organs in the innumerable Tribes of ſenſible Creatures. Nor does the Underſtanding leſs excel the Senſes in the Variety of its Objects, than in the more perfect manner of apprehending them. It extends its Views through a more enlarged Sphere,

Sphere, and is more unconfined in the Exerciſe of its Powers, even than the Eye itſelf, though receiving a Tribute of Light brought every Moment from the diſtant Skies, and counting the Stars amongſt the Subjects of its Dominion. No Darkneſs can efface its Ideas; no Diſtance of Time or Place can remove an Object beyond the Reach of its Perception. No conquering Force can riſle the Treaſures of its Knowledge, or invade the inviolable Sanctuary of its Liberty: No lawleſs Power can ſet Bounds to its Territories, or reſtrain it from ranging through Infinity. Of ſo much a more excellent Nature is the Underſtanding than the Senſes; and ſo far does it exceed them in the Capacity of delightful Perceptions.

PHILEBUS.

I ACKNOWLEDGE every other Excellency of this divine Faculty, but I cannot yield up to it the Perception of Pleaſure.

SOCRATES.

How little ſoever you may eſteem every other Entertainment it affords, you will not I ſuppoſe deny the Perception of Beauty to be attended with Pleaſure.

PHILEBUS.

THIS I maintain to be the nobleſt of all Pleaſures.

SOCRATES.

IF then the Perception of Beauty be placed in the Underſtanding, you can no longer deny it the Honour of ſupplying the nobleſt Pleaſure.

PHILEBUS.

IF you can convince me of this, I may ſafely engage to become your Convert.

SOCRATES.

I SHOULD not deſpair of your Converſion, could a Perſon of ſuch refined Thought, the Faculties of whoſe Mind muſt be ſo extremely delicate, condeſcend to bear the Fatigue of that Cloſeneſs of Attention, which is familiar to Underſtandings of a groſſer Make.

PHILEBUS.

IF you will take a little Pains with me, I promiſe to employ my utmoſt Stretch of Attention.

SOCRATES.

THE Point to be proved was, that the Perception of Beauty is ſeated in the Underſtanding.

PHILEBUS.

THE Expectation of ſeeing you foiled in maintaining ſo Heterodox an Opinion, will eaſily keep it in my Remembrance.

SOCRATES.

BEAUTY conſiſts in Symmetry: And is Symmetry perceived by the Senſes, or by the Underſtanding?

PHI-

PHILEBUS.

THE Queſtion is ſubtile, and perhaps enſnaring; I cannot ſafely determine it.

SOCRATES.

Do the Powers of Senſe extend to the Science of Numbers, or of Geometry?

PHILEBUS.

SCIENCE is the peculiar Attribute of the Underſtanding.

SOCRATES.

IF then Symmetry conſiſts in a Regularity of Numbers, Meaſures, and Proportions, not to be diſcovered without ſome Degrees of Knowledge, can it be perceived by ſuch Faculties as are void of Knowledge?

PHILEBUS.

THAT it cannot, is evident.

SOCRATES.

SYMMETRY cannot then be perceived by the Senſes: —— Nor Beauty, which conſiſts in Symmetry: ——

IF I rightly interpret your aſſenting Nod. ——

THE Perception of Beauty is then only to be attributed to the Underſtanding.

PHILEBUS.

YOU have in vain entangled me in a curious Net of Argumentation, which every Inſect in Reaſoning, though it wants the Skill to unravel, may eaſily break through. You need only open your Eyes to be convinced that Beauty is a viſible Object, whilſt you

you are ſurrounded with ſo many Inſtances of it, every where riſing to your View. What think you of that elegant Piece of Architecture, which terminates this well-proportioned Walk? Is it perceived by the Eye, or by the Underſtanding?

SOCRATES.

THESE Faculties are here employed in Conjunction, each of which would be ſingly inſufficient to give us the Pleaſure of admiring this beautiful Structure. The Structure itſelf without the Aid of Senſe would have remained unſeen: The Symmetry of its Proportions without the Diſcernment of the Underſtanding would have been unperceived. Theſe different Faculties, thus blended together, cauſe a mixed Perception, and make it appear ambiguous to the Mind, whether the beauteous Objects they are employed on are Viſible or Intelligible. But if their different Perceptions are accurately diſtinguiſhed, it will be evident that the Object itſelf is inviſible to the Underſtanding, and that its Beauty is imperceptible to the Eye.

PHILEBUS.

I APPREHEND the Juſtneſs of your Obſervation, which would methinks be more ſatisfactory, had I the Power to try the Experiment, by cloſing the Eye of my Underſtanding, and ſurveying theſe beautiful Scenes by that of Senſe alone.

SOCRATES.

SINCE you may experience, on the cloſing your Eye, theſe Scenes to become inviſible; why ſhould you not conclude that their Beauty would in like manner diſappear on the cloſing your Underſtanding? But ſince this latter Experiment is impracticable, I can only refer you to the Obſervations you may make on ſenſible Creatures, not endued with Reaſon. Do you imagine that the Birds, perching on theſe Trees, are delighted with the Regularity of the Plantation? Or does the heedleſs Fawn, quenching his Thirſt in yonder Fountain, ſeem ſtruck with the Beauty of the Statue, which ſupplies the limpid Lake?

PHILEBUS.

I DO not indeed ſuſpect them to have a Taſte of theſe beautiful Works of Art? But yet they appear, at leaſt in ſome Inſtances, not altogether inſenſible of Beauty.

SOCRATES.

THEY likewiſe betray ſome faint Appearances of Reaſon, correſponding to theſe imperfect Perceptions of Beauty; both which are perhaps more properly attributed to a certain Inſtinct Nature has infuſed into them, than to a Rational Diſcernment? But then even this Inſtinct, whatſoever it be, is a Principle different from, and ſuperior to, mere Senſe; which, even on this Suppoſition, is inſufficient for the Perception of Beauty.

PHI-

PHILEBUS.

IF the Senſes are not ſufficient, you muſt at leaſt allow them to be neceſſary, to the Perception of Beauty.

SOCRATES.

THE Mind needs not the Aſſiſtance of the Senſes in the Diſcovery of Intellectual Beauty: And, even in the Diſcovery of Senſible Beauty, they are only ſubſervient to the Underſtanding, by lending a proper Medium for the Diſcernment of it. It is farther obſervable, that the Capacity of becoming thus ſubſervient to the Underſtanding, in the Perception of Beauty, is a Privilege confined to the Eye and the Ear, and denied to the Inferior Senſes. Hence Beauty or Harmony are never aſcribed to the leſs refined Senſations of the Smell or Taſte; nor, in ſtrict Propriety of Language, to ſimple Sounds, or Colours, however agreeable to the Senſes; but only to meaſured Sounds, and to Colours diſpoſed in Regular Figures; becauſe in theſe only Symmetry is perceiveable. For tho', as it has been obſerved, all the Pleaſures of the Senſes are produced (or rather occaſioned) by an hidden Symmetry or Suitableneſs of the Objects to their reſpective Organs; yet in this Caſe the Symmetry is not directly perceived by the Underſtanding, but only inferred from its pleaſing Effect; whereas it is indiſpenſibly required to the Perception of Beauty, that the

Symmetry itſelf be diſcerned. And ſince you allow the Perception of Symmetry to be Science, not Senſation; does it not evidently follow from hence that, notwithſtanding beautiful Objects may be diſcerned by the Senſes, yet Beauty itſelf can only be perceived by the Underſtanding?

PHILEBUS.

I OWN this Conſequence ſeems undeniable.

SOCRATES.

WHICH then is to be eſteemed the nobler and the more delightful Perception, that of the beautiful and agreeable Object, or that of the Beauty itſelf, which renders it beautiful and agreeable?

PHILEBUS.

THIS Latter Perception ſeems more tranſcendently noble and delightful.

SOCRATES.

YOU muſt then be obliged to own, that the moſt delightful Perceptions belong to the Underſtanding.

PHILEBUS.

THIS Obligation may perhaps be owing to my Eaſineſs in ſuffering myſelf ſo tamely to be led captive in a Chain of imaginary Conſequences: But tho' I could without Difficulty, ſhake off theſe ſlender Chains, as the Notion you have advanced is new to me, I ſhould be unwilling, by awakening you out of a pleaſing Dream, to loſe the Entertainment of it. SO-

SOCRATES.

TRUTH is ſo powerful an Enchantreſs, that you need be under no Apprehenſion of awakening me out of the Dreams infuſed from her beamy Wand. All the Charms of Symmetry are found united in her. The confuſed Proſpect of Error is mere Inconſiſtency, Diſproportion, and Diſagreement; more deformed and diſcordant than confuſed Figures or jarring Sounds: But Truth, thro' all its various Syſtems, is conſiſtent, beautiful and harmonious; its Parts anſwering to each other, like the Proportions of ſome glorious Structure more laſting than Adamant; its never-fading Ideas combining to form immortal Beauties, not to be revealed but to the Underſtanding alone. Here the various Wonders of Symmetry, the ſhining Patterns of Intellectual Beauties, are diſcloſed in their Original Glory, unknowing Change or Decay; the faint Copies of which, traced out in ſenſible Objects, are mutable and tranſient. It will be acknowledged, that the Original Beauties, which are purely Intellectual, can only be diſcovered by the Underſtanding: And it may juſtly be inferred that the ſenſible Beauties, correſponding to theſe Originals from whence they are copied, can only be rightly diſcerned by the ſame Faculty, which alone is capable of comparing them, and judging of their Reſemblance, and perceiving that Excellence, which entirely

entirely conſiſts in it. This may perhaps be more eaſily apprehended, by conſidering the more imperfect Tranſcripts of Intellectual Beauty impreſſed on ſenſible Objects, which are more familiar to our Underſtanding; ſuch as are owing to Human Art, and are produced by the Pencil, or the Chizzle. It is evident that the Beauties of this Kind are only diſcoverable by an Intellectual Perception; ſince the Taſte of the elegant Pleaſures they inſpire, depends on Knowledge, and is gradually formed by an Improvement in the Arts that give Birth to them. The rude Surpriſe of gazing Ignorance, new to theſe Arts, and diſcerning little of their Beauty, ſoon vaniſhes, and the pleaſing Wonder is ſucceeded by Indifference. It is the knowing Artiſt alone who ſtands fixed in Attention to the breathing Paint or Marble, transformed to a Figure as ſilent and motionleſs as thoſe he ſurveys. It is the judicious Ear, which liſtens with Taſte to the refined Harmony of the Lute, or more enchanting Voice; and betrays in every Geſture that conſcious Skill, by which the well-governed Rapture is excited. And can you doubt, whether theſe are Pleaſures of the Underſtanding, which are taſted by us in ſuch juſt Proportion to our Knowledge?

PHILEBUS.

IT may be juſtly queſtioned, whether the Taſte of theſe pleaſing Arts be in ſuch exact Proportion to the Knowledge of them, as you apprehend. How many are exquiſitely delighted with the View of Paintings, who are incapable of employing a Pencil? And how negligent of theſe Pleaſures do we ſometimes obſerve ſuch as are not altogether unskilful in the Arts, on which you ſay they ſo conſtantly attend?

SOCRATES.

IT is the Skill of judging, not of performing in theſe Arts, which is in ſome Degree neceſſary in order to taſte their Beauties: But it may indeed be called in queſtion, whether mere Knowledge be ſufficient to form a Taſte of them. For, ſince Beauty is a Reſult from Truth, the Obſervation of it ſeems an Improvement on the Diſcovery of Truth, a Superſtructure raiſed from Knowledge: And conſequently, though there can be no Taſte without ſome Degree of Knowledge, there may be at leaſt an imperfect Knowledge, not yet improved into a Taſte. It is evident from the Experience of the Virtuoſoes, in every Kind, that there is a peculiar Attention due to Beauty, no leſs than to Truth. Some Beauties, like the more ſimple Truths, are ſelf-evident, and ſtrike the Mind at the firſt View: Others, which are more complex, muſt be traced

out by a curious Eye or Ear, and gradually unfolded by the Underſtanding. Thus it is no leſs a Work of Genius to form a Taſte of theſe nobler Arts, than to gain a Knowledge of thoſe Sciences, on which they are built. The Underſtanding makes a ſlow and laborious Progreſs in each of them, animated and rewarded by a Pleaſure, in which they both conſpire. And the Want of the Attention neceſſary to form this Taſte, makes it alike eaſy to be accounted for, why ſo many, diverted by meaner Purſuits, are inſenſible of the Charms of Beauty, as why they are untouched with the Love of Truth.

PHILEBUS.

I FEAR you will think me to be numbered with the inattentive Multitude, who have made little Progreſs in the Purſuit of theſe ſhadowy Pleaſures, to which, I own, I ſtill prefer ſuch as are more ſubſtantial: But I ſhall be obliged to you, if you will point out to me ſome of thoſe ſelf-evident Beauties, which lie within the Reach of my uninſtructed Underſtanding.

SOCRATES.

A BODY of any ſimple, but regular Figure, will be preferred, even by a Child, to any miſhapen irregular Maſs, merely on Account of its obvious Symmetry.

PHI-

PHILEBUS.

A CHILD may be amuſed with contemplating ſuch Figures, but the Speculation would ſcarce be thought worthy of a Philoſopher.

SOCRATES.

THESE are only the firſt Elements, of which the nobleſt Structures are compoſed; and thoſe you will allow to be worthy of your Admiration.

PHILEBUS.

IT cannot be denied that a magnificent Pile of Architecture, graced with various Symmetry, is beautiful: But I can diſcern little Beauty in the Elements it is compoſed of, unleſs more Variety were combined with their Uniformity.

SOCRATES.

WOULD a Globe of the largeſt Dimenſions have any ſenſible Weight, if the minuteſt Particles it is compoſed of had not their due Proportion of Gravity?

PHILEBUS.

I AM not provided with Philoſophical Scales to weigh theſe ponderous Atoms.

SOCRATES.

YOU would, I believe, find ſmall Temptation in a ſingle Drop of the rich eſt Wine.

PHILEBUS.

IN this, your Belief is Orthodox.

SOCRATES.

AND yet each ſparkling Drop partakes of the Spirit and Flavour of the full Goblet.

PHILEBUS.

I APPROVE your Reaſoning, in Favour of the agreeable Inſtance you have made choice of.

SOCRATES.

COULD then the moſt various and complex Symmetry amount to ſo large a Sum of Beauty, unleſs the ſimpleſt Kinds of it were proportionably beautiful?

PHILEBUS.

I HAVE no Perception of a Beauty ſo extremely ſmall, notwithſtanding Reaſon aſſures me it muſt be real.

SOCRATES.

IF you admit the Reality of it, the Conceſſion is ſufficient: Your Imagination will no leſs fail you in graſping the vaſt Immenſity it muſt extend to, when multiplied to a ſufficient Variety, than in diſcerning its minute Beginnings. It would not perhaps be difficult to make it appear, that Pleaſures, like ſenſible Qualities, conſiſt of very minute Parts, of the ſame Nature with the Whole, though perhaps ſingly imperceptible. To give you an Inſtance of it, ſuitable to the Subject we are upon: Could you liſten with any ſenſible Degree of Pleaſure to the Sounds a Muſical Inſtrument

ment is formed to expreſs, if recited at equal Diſtances of Time, in the ſimpleſt Order?

PHILEBUS.

THE Ear would rather ſeem offended, than pleaſed, with ſuch a tedious Train of Sounds.

SOCRATES.

AND yet the moſt exquiſite Harmony conſiſts only of different Combinations of the ſame Sounds; and unleſs in that ſimple Order they afforded ſome little Delight, they could not be improved into ſuch an irreſiſtible Charm, merely by varying the Numbers and Meaſures, and by diverſifying the Manner in which they are recited. So ſmall and ſeemingly inconſiderable are the Pleaſures ariſing from obvious Symmetry; and to ſuch an inconceivable Degree are they multiplied and encreaſed in the more complicated Syſtems; tho' we cannot be ſufficiently ſenſible of their Charms, till they are gradually unravelled and unfolded to the Underſtanding, by a ſlow and curious Attention!

PHILEBUS.

IT ſeems that the Underſtanding would be under a great Diſadvantage, were it to contend with the Senſes in engaging greater Numbers to purſue the Pleaſures offered by it: The Majority would undoubtedly be deterred from a Purſuit attended with ſo much Toil and Difficulty.

SOCRATES.

You are unqueſtionably in the right, in judging that the Pleaſures of the Underſtanding would be deſpiſed by the greater Number, though not in aſſigning the Cauſe of this unjuſt Contempt. It appears from the laborious Purſuits Mankind are engaged in, that it is not ſo much their Indolence, as their Ignorance of the Pleaſures of the Underſtanding, which prevents their purſuit of them. The few of them that are obvious, appear ſo inconſiderable, that it is no wonder they are diſregarded; and ſuch of them as would inſpire the moſt ardent Deſires, are ſo far retired from the general View, that their ſuperior Charms are rendered ineffectual by remaining undiſcovered: And were the Objects of ſenſible Pleaſures as difficult to be diſcerned, they would in the ſame Manner loſe the Force of raiſing Men's Deſires, by eſcaping their Obſervation. If the Eye had required as much Improvement as the Underſtanding, and the Progreſs of Light had been as ſlow as that of Knowledge, the Generality of Mankind would as patiently have acquieſced in a contented Blindneſs, as they now remain in Ignorance. They might perhaps have ſubmitted to the painful Task of acquiring ſuch a Meaſure of Light as was neceſſary for the common Affairs of Life, as they are now forced to ſome low Attainments of

Know-

Knowledge for the ſame Ends: But how eaſily would they have been diverted from the free Admiſſion of any ſuperfluous Rays? How would they have deſpiſed the idle Virtuoſoes, who were employed in the unneceſſary Improvements of their Sight! How would they have ridiculed ſuch as repreſented to them the Variety and Agreeableneſs of free and unbounded Proſpects; and decried the Vanity of pretending accurately to diſtinguiſh Colours! How many Ages would have paſſed over their Heads, before the Sun would have become viſible to Mankind! How incredible would they have thought the Diſcovery of an Object ſo remote from the Earth! How ſeverely would they have cenſured the Arrogance of that daring Mortal, who firſt preſumed to lift his Eyes to a Being placed ſo far above him! And how great Diſcretion would it have required, to lead them to the Acknowledgment of this glorious Source of Light!

PHILEBUS.

You have diverted yourſelf with drawing an Univerſal Night-Piece, repreſenting the gloomy Proſpect of a darkened World; and ſeem wonderfully entertained with this imaginary Scene of Human Affairs, which you ſuppoſe to be really as void of Knowledge, as you have fancied it to be deſtitute of Light. But even with regard to theſe very Pleaſures attributed by you to the Un-

Underſtanding, Mankind are far from being ſo blind as you have repreſented them. Do not you obſerve, how much every Part of Human Life is embelliſhed by the Beauties of every Kind? How fond are we of diſtinguiſhing ourſelves by theſe Ornaments, and how profuſe in purchaſing them? How do we value ourſelves on admiring, or at leaſt pretending to admire, the Charms of Muſick or Painting! What Politeneſs do we affect in Building, Planting, Gardening! What curious Skill in the Choice of Garments, Equipage, Furniture! beſides numberleſs Toys of yet leſſer Importance; in all which we appear ſtudious, even to Exceſs, of Elegance and Symmetry! And it may juſtly be obſerved of theſe refined Pleaſures ſo generally purſued, that they are not ſo innocent as you have repreſented them; I fear theſe little Luxuries have a great Share in enflaming our Vices and Follies, and in ſpreading the Miſchiefs of Avarice and Oppreſſion.

SOCRATES.

You ſeem a little to forget your own Argument, from the Conſent of Mankind, in giving the Preference to the Pleaſures of Senſe. Do not you apprehend that I may take advantage of this general Purſuit of Intellectual Beauty, and appeal in my Turn to the Judgment of the World in favour of the Pleaſures of the Underſtanding? But

you

you need be in no Pain: I am not ſo ungenerous as to draw ſo unfair an Inference from an Effect, which is more owing to the Influence of Vanity than of Beauty. It is this Principle which gives a new Value to the elegant Works of Art you have recounted, not proportionable to their Beauty, but to their Capacity of ſerving as Inſtruments of Diſtinction. Hence the different Reception given by the Generality to the Siſter Arts of Poetry and Painting: The Heaven-born Muſe is deſpiſed and neglected, becauſe her nobler Gifts are communicated, like the Bleſſings of Heaven, with a diffuſive Bounty: Whilſt her ungenerous Siſter is honoured and cheriſhed, becauſe the Beauties diſpenſed by her niggarly Hand are difficult to be purchaſed; and are, on that Merit, preferred to the Cabinets of Princes.

PHILEBUS.

HAS Beauty then no Influence on Mankind?

SOCRATES.

IT has doubtleſs a very great Influence on the Few, who are ſo happy as to be capable of diſtinguiſhing it: But, though none perhaps are altogether inſenſible of its pleaſing Powers, the prevailing falſe Taſte is a flagrant Proof, that what is ſo little underſtood can be little regarded. The Miſchiefs attending this falſe and affected Purſuit of Beauty, ſtill farther expoſe the Error of its pre-

pretended Followers, as they proceed from the Abſurdity of miſtaking the Poſſeſſion of it for the Enjoyment. Hence they are ſo little ſollicitous to gain the Taſte of Beauty, in which alone the Pleaſure of it conſiſts, and ſo ambitious in contending for the Property of it, which is unneceſſary and inſufficient to render them ſenſible of its Charms.

PHILEBUS.

I OWN the mere Poſſeſſion of Beauty to be inſufficient; but is it not ſometimes neceſſary to the Enjoyment of it?

SOCRATES.

THE Men of Taſte eaſily find Opportunities of gratifying their Curioſity, at the Expence of the Poſſeſſors, whoſe Vanity makes it their Intereſt to oblige them with a View of the Treaſures of Beauty they have collected.

PHILEBUS.

IN this, I confeſs, they do not ill copy the Example of the Men of Pleaſure.

SOCRATES.

BUT, admitting that ſome leſſer Beauties of this Kind may be enviouſly concealed from their Sight, they have no great Temptation to repine at this trifling Inconvenience, ſince the Works of Nature, infinitely excelling thoſe of Art, are perpetually expoſed to their View. Theſe are not locked up in the Cabinets of the Curious, nor confined to the Palaces of the

Great

Great or Wealthy; but plentifully diſperſed through all the ſeveral Apartments of the Univerſe, and freely offered to the Obſervation of every Spectator.

PHILEBUS.

THIS Happineſs the Peaſant equally partakes with the Prince.

SOCRATES.

TRUE Happineſs is not leſſened, but encreaſed, the more it is communicated. But, ſince you ſo much affect to be diſtinguiſhed by ſuperior Enjoyments, the Pleaſures of this Sort may perpetually be enlarged and improved by a more extenſive Knowledge of the Works of Nature.

PHILEBUS.

SOME little Acquaintance with the politer Arts, has qualified me to accompany you hitherto in tracing out the Pleaſures they afford: But you muſt excuſe me, if I can no longer follow you, in the intricate Purſuit of thoſe which lye concealed in ſo profound an Abyſs of Knowledge.

SOCRATES.

I SHOULD have juſt Reaſon to complain, ſhould I be deſerted by ſo agreeable a Companion; a Companion profeſſing ſo much Reſolution to wander after Joys unknown, ſuch undaunted Courage to open untrodden Paths of Pleaſure. Is this the auſpicious Guide, who undertook to conduct me to new Regions of Delight! Is this the happy

by Diſcoverer of unknown Lands of Bliſs! The mighty Genius formed to enlarge the Territories of Happineſs! And does he now refuſe to follow me in the noble Chaſe? Is he ſo remiſs and negligent in the Purſuit of every Pleaſure, he is not perpetually urged to by the Spur of Appetite? Does he meanly condeſcend to confine his Deſires within the Limits of his Knowledge, and injuriouſly deny them the Liberty of ranging through the Univerſe?

PHILEBUS.

HOWEVER you may reproach me, I ſhould not ſo eaſily give up the Purſuit of Pleaſure, were there any Hopes of Succeſs in it. But what Proſpect of Succeſs can the changeable Schemes of this Philoſophy afford? What Fruit can be expected from a Branch of Science perpetually varying from itſelf, where the fleeting Syſtems continually fade, and new Opinions riſe, which appear freſh and blooming for a while, then wither, and leave room for ſome more flouriſhing Hypotheſis to ſucceed? If Happineſs be the growth of Knowledge, how can a plentiful Harveſt be expected, where the Seeds of it are ſown in endleſs Doubt and Uncertainty?

SOCRATES.

YOU too raſhly conclude that nothing can be clearly diſcerned, though a Multitude of Objects muſt of neceſſity appear confuſed

ſed and undiſtinguiſhable in ſo vaſtly extenſive a Scene; and over-timorouſly deſpair of obtaining a Clue to guide our Steps, though wandring in the ambiguous Mazes of that immenſe Labyrinth, which the Hand of Nature has traced with ſuch curious Skill, and rendered by its very Intricacy the more entertaining to her inquiſitive Sons. But ſince your Impatience of Doubt or Error makes you ſo very fearful of being deceived in this curious Search, (though in other Caſes you have declared your ſelf no Enemy to a pleaſing Deception,) I will for the Preſent wave a farther Enquiry into this delightful Fund of Knowledge, in which the Truth is too frequently obſcured with Clouds of Uncertainty, impervious to Human Sight; and lead you on to thoſe Sciences, from whence the Poſſibility of Error is far removed, and which no Shadow of Doubtfulneſs can approach. Here the Truth ſhines forth in a purer Light, caſting a Dimneſs on the feeble Rays of the Sun, and darting a Luſtre through the Objects diſcovered by it, rendering them tranſparent to the Underſtanding, and perfectly comprehended by a ſuperior Power of Perception, compared with which the moſt vivid Perceptions of Senſe are faint and languid.

PHILEBUS.

THESE abſtruſe Sciences are too dry and tedious to afford an Entertainment wor-

thy of a gay and lively Genius; though they may perhaps furniſh fit Employment to Minds of a dull and thoughtful Make, incapable of taſting Wit or Pleaſure, and patient of muſing away their joyleſs Hours in ſolving obſcure and intricate Problems. I hope it is not your Deſign to deface the Beauty of theſe Walks, by ploughing the yielding Turf in learned Furrows, or by leaving the Marks of your profound Science in Diagrams traced in the levelled Sand.

SOCRATES.

LET us ſuppoſe that, while you are intent on your Favourite Poet, and perhaps peruſing with Rapture ſome tender Paſſion or beautiful Deſcription, you ſhould be ſurpriſed by ſome gay Barbarian, unacquainted with the Uſe of Letters; would he not think you very ridiculous in appearing ſo unaccountably tranſported at the Sight of a few odd Characters, and cenſure your Dullneſs and Stupidity in finding in them an agreeable Entertainment.

PHILEBUS.

THE Wonder of this Barbarian would ceaſe, and he would retract his unjuſt Cenſure, could he diſcern the beautiful Ideas raiſed in my Mind by theſe fair * Attick

* *The Reader, if no* Grecian, *may not perhaps have obſerved that theſe* Athenians *are converſing in their Native Dialect, and may give him an Opportunity of gratifying his Curioſity with a Taſte of their Language.*

Characters,

Characters, which his Ignorance had rendered ſo odd and unintelligible to him.

SOCRATES.

AND would not you, if you had the Fairneſs and Ingenuity of this Barbarian, retract the like unjuſt Cenſure you have paſſed on the Mathematician, with ſo much the leſs Excuſe, as you can plead leſs Ignorance, did you diſcern the noble Truths ariſing to his Underſtanding from the Figures he contemplates? Did you ſurvey the Tablet, wherein his Theorems are delineated, in the Light it is placed in by his enlarged Imagination, you would perceive it on a ſuddain widening beneath your Eye, and extending itſelf on every Side to an unbounded Level, excelling the poliſhed Chryſtal in its Smoothneſs. On this glaſſy Surface you might diſcover, traced with inimitable Exactneſs by the Pencil of Thought, an infinite Variety of Figures of all poſſible Dimenſions; ſome containing a perfect Equality under various Forms; others ſimilar in Shape, but encreaſing or decreaſing through a never-ending Series, perpetually uniform, and conſtant to the ſame Proportions. On each Triangle or Circle, is raiſed in ſhadowy Architecture, perhaps a Pyramid tranſpiercing the Skies, a Cone covering the Earth with its Baſis, or perhaps a Sphere glides over the poliſhed Plane, capable of encloſing the Univerſe within its Circum-

Circumference; whilſt, correſponding with theſe, Figures inviſible to the Eye of the ſmalleſt Inſect are diſtinctly ſurveyed, in their minuteſt Proportions, by a keener Ray from the viſual Power of the Underſtanding. Here the firſt Lineaments of material Beauties appear in their Native Perfection: And here are formed in Thought the Original Patterns of every Work of Art or Nature. In Schemes like theſe the Model of the Univerſe was deſigned by the Divine Mind; on this immoveable Foundation was erected the Balance in which the Planets were weighed; in this Store-Houſe are repoſited the Golden Compaſſes, which meaſured out their Orbits, and deſcribed their Motions; and, however the fleeting Creation may fade or vary, the Archetypes of Worlds diſſolved, or yet unborn, will here remain for ever inviolable. If ever the beautiful Works of Nature can be rightly underſtood, they muſt here be viewed in the Light of this Divine Geometry. And it is with no ſmall Pleaſure that I can inform you, that the Philoſophers of *Greece*, aſſiſted by the Dawn of Eaſtern Knowledge, have already begun to trace out by this Science the Rudiments of a new, harmonious Syſtem of the Univerſe; though much I fear it will remain unfiniſhed, or perhaps neglected, till ſome greater Genius, more happily formed for the Diſcovery of theſe Wonders of

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Divine Art, ſhall raiſe the Admiration of ſome future Age, or diſtant Clime, by reſtoring and compleating it. Permit me, in the mean Time, to entertain you with this Shadow of future Science; which, unleſs my Prophetick Genius deceives me, will be eſteemed hereafter no uncertain Speculation.

PHILEBUS.

SUCH Speculations, if not uncertain, will prove very unentertaining to a Mind ſo much diſenclined to the inexperienced Pleaſures of this ſhadowy Kind.

SOCRATES.

I THOUGHT you had given me juſt Reaſon to hope, the Circumſtance of their being new and untaſted would have been a powerful Recommendation of them to you. You obſerve, that Pleaſures, when fully underſtood, are cold and languid; and complain of the Repetition of ſuch dull Delights as afford nothing new to engage your Expectation. And can you, conſiſtently with theſe Sentiments, perſiſt in adhering to the Pleaſures of Senſe, which admit of no Variation or Improvement; and in rejecting thoſe of the Underſtanding, a Faculty perpetually unfolding it ſelf, and enlarging its Sphere; whilſt every Truth it diſcovers, like a Fruitful Grain, becomes a Seed of new Truths ſpringing from it, and for ever propagates an encreaſing Harveſt of Knowledge?

PHI-

ces. The nimble-footed Nymph, moving in the inmoſt Circle, neareſt to the central Fire, was graced with the Wand and Wings of MERCURY. The next in Order wore the embroidered *Ceſtos* of VENUS. The Third was crowned like CERES, with a ſheafy Wreath, and accompanied by a little PROSERPINE, twelve Times ſurrounding her in her Courſe. Beyond theſe were ſeen, performing each of them a larger Circuit, two Majeſtic Nymphs diſtinguiſhed by the Attributes of MARS and JUPITER, the brandiſhed Spear, and the beamy Lightening. A venerable Prieſteſs, meaſuring with ſlow and ſolemn Steps the wide-extended Orbit of SATURN, encircled the Starry Train.

PHILEBUS.

I cannot ſufficiently admire the Politeneſs and Addreſs of theſe *Egyptian* Sages in dreſſing up a Syſtem of Aſtronomy, in ſo gay and beautiful a Repreſentation. The myſtic Dance was doubtleſs very entertaining; but had I been THALES or PYTHAGORAS, I fear I ſhould have received little Inſtruction from it.

SOCRATES.

THE curious Entertainment was not loſt on theſe Philoſophers, who copied from it a new Plan of Aſtronomy, till then unknown to *Greece*; and alluded to it in the fabled Harmony of the moving Spheres, directing the well-meaſured Dance of Planets around

around the Sun. The elegant Arrangement of the Heavenly Bodies, taught by the Nymphs, was with eaſe improved into a more enlarged Draught of the Univerſe, in which the Principal Points of View are innumerable Suns, fixed in ſuch immenſe Spheres, throughout the Regions of a boundleſs Expanſion, that to an Eye placed within the Confines of each radiant Sun, the numberleſs Myriads of them encompaſſed with equal Radiance, are concealed or diminiſhed by their various Diſtances, and made to appear a Profuſion of faintly glittering Stars. Each of theſe vaſt Luminaries, remaining as an immoveable Centre, has a convenient Number of habitable Globes of an Earthy Make revolving about it, and forming by their Revolutions the Viciſſitude of Days and Nights, and the Variety of Seaſons, as they are more enclined towards it, or more averted from its Rays. Theſe Rays darting from it on every Side, and ſpreading into ſo vaſt a Sphere, diffuſe a Luſtre, ſimple and uniform in Appearance, but ſeparable into Colours by various Refractions, and diſtinguiſhing the different Bodies reflecting it. They likewiſe produce in each habitable Globe, penetrated by their genial Heat, Vegetables of various Kinds, covering it with a delightful Verdure, and affording an hoſpitable Shade and Nouriſhment to numerous Tribes of Living Creatures.

As there is a Reſemblance obſervable between the Plants and Animals belonging to each Earth, though varying more and more, as they are placed in Parts of it more remote from each other: ſo there may be ſuppoſed a Reſemblance between the Vegetables and Inhabitants of the Family of kindred Globes revolving round the ſame Sun; though differing farther from each other in proportion to their Diſtances, as they receive different Degrees of Light and Heat, ſuitable to the different Elements they are compoſed of. In like manner the Neighbouring Suns, with their revolving Earths, may be ſuppoſed to have a nearer Reſemblance, than thoſe which are more remote, ſurrounded with other Skies, and planted in new Fields of Ether. The Beams of each Sun may not improbably be formed of a different Texture, ſeparable into new Colours, and producing new Effects, peculiar to each Syſtem. And thus the Difference between the various Syſtems may encreaſe, as they grow more remote, till their Reſemblance gradually vaniſhes, and their Variety becomes incomprehenſible. Who ſhall recount the Number of theſe inviſible Syſtems, or deſcribe the Regions of the Univerſe ſo far removed beyond our Conception!

PHILEBUS.

YOU ſeem to need no Aſſiſtance in deſcribing, or perhaps in travelling through, theſe imaginary Worlds: But it is methinks great Pity, that you have confined the Inhabitants, each of them to their own Earth.

SOCRATES.

THE Terreſtrial People muſt, I fear, ſubmit to this Confinement, at leaſt during their preſent State: But ſince every Earth thus ſwarms with Life, can the pure Etherial Spaces want Inhabitants, formed with nobler Senſes, deſcrying Objects far as the brighteſt Suns extend their Beams, and perhaps ſupplied with Wings, conveying them from Syſtem to Syſtem with eaſe and ſwiftneſs, not to be conceived by Creatures confined to their own Earth?

PHILEBUS.

I SHOULD be glad to make an Acquaintance with one of theſe Ethereal Travellers; the Relation of his Diſcoveries would doubtleſs be very entertaining.

SOCRATES.

YOU are then at length become willing to allow, that Knowledge is not altogether void of Entertainment.

PHILEBUS.

SUCH more than Human Knowledge muſt be confeſſed to be capable of giving infinite Delight.

SOCRATES.

AND did you then imagine that an Eſtimate of the Pleaſures of Knowledge was to be taken from our ſcanty Meaſures of it? But ſince you allow a very Extenſive Knowledge to be delightful, every leſſer Portion of it muſt be attended with ſome Degrees of Delight. This Delight is principally the Reſult of the Beauty and Symmetry of the Objects of our Knowledge.

PHILEBUS.

ALL Knowledge is not then alike pleaſant to the Mind.

SOCRATES.

THE Pleaſures of the Underſtanding, like thoſe of the Sight and of every other Senſe, are proportionable to the Agreeableneſs of the Objects they reſult from. What Delight can even the Proſpect of the Univerſe be conceived to have offered, whilſt it lay in a rude and formleſs Chaos, covered with Darkneſs and Horror, painful and aſtoniſhing even to Thought and Imagination! The Power of ſurveying the confuſed Maſs in that State of utter Deformity, was indeed highly uſeful, although not delightful: It may be preſumed to have been attended to, even by the All-forming Mind, as the skilful Ear liſtens with Patience to the diſcordant Harp, in order to reconcile its Diſſonancies, and to reſtore its Harmony.

PHI-

PHILEBUS.

THE Pleaſure of Knowledge then, according to your Syſtem, depends on the Agreeableneſs of its Object; and this Agreeableneſs ariſes from Symmetry. But is all Symmetry alike agreeable?

SOCRATES.

THERE are various Kinds of Symmetry, affording different degrees of Delight, and forming a Scale of different Orders of Beauty. The loweſt Kind is that of Material and Inanimate Beings, which, ſo long as they continue miſhapen and irregular, are in a State of utter Deformity. They receive the firſt Impreſſions of Beauty, when merely reduced to Regularity, though anſwering no farther End; but if the regular Form they are reduced to, be ſubſervient to ſome higher Purpoſe, and has a Relation to ſome nobler Being, there is then a farther Degree of Symmetry, ſuperior to mere Regularity. This higher Degree of it may be more eminently called Deſign, (for even the ſlighteſt Inſtance of Symmetry can ſcarce be undeſigned) and as the Deſign is more noble and excellent, it riſes in Beauty and Dignity. Who could behold without Delight and Admiration the regular Frame of the Univerſe (ſuch as it has been preſented to your View) though he merely conſidered the Order and Regularity of its innumerable Syſtems? But a new Scene of Wonders

ders would be diſcloſed to his Obſervation, as ſoon as he was made to apprehend, how accurately the Diſtances of the correſponding Earths and Suns are adapted to the Production of Vegetables, and a juſt Meaſure of Heat is imparted to fill each blooming Ball with a Spring and Autumn, peculiar to its Soil and Conſtitution. As the moſt curious Syſtems of the Inanimate Creation yield to the tender blooming Charms of Vegetable Life, and boaſt the Power of giving Birth to it, as their nobleſt Privilege; ſo the beauteous Race of Vegetables ſeem to acknowledge with Pride and Joy the Glory of miniſtring to the Delight and Suſtenance of the Animal Worlds, and own their rich Profuſion of Sweets not idly waſted on Creatures ſenſible of their Perfections. And as the vital Juices, flowing in Veſſels of a curious Texture, ſupplying flagrant Breath and kindly Nurture, and giving them a Power of propagating a Race of future Plants, diſcover in Vegetables Perfections ſuperior to the Powers of Inanimate Beings; ſo the various Organs of Senſe beſtowed on the innumerable Tribes of Animals, and exquiſitely ſuited to the endleſs Diverſities of Flagrancy and Flavour imparted to the Flowers and Fruits, diſplay an inexpreſſible Force of Virtue and Symmetry, exceeding the Capacities of the inſenſible Creation; and much more ſuperior to the moſt perfect

fect Syſtems of lifeleſs Matter. The various Kinds of Creatures endued with Senſe alone, receive from thence that little Portion of Pleaſure, which reſults from the Impreſſions of ſenſible Objects on their own Organs; but are incapable of conceiving any Delight from Reflection on the Pleaſures of their Fellow-Creatures, with which their Senſes cannot be in the leaſt affected. But, if to the Animal Nature be ſuperadded Intelligence, the Perception of the delightful Harmony between the ſenſible Objects and the Organs they were ſuited to, becomes highly grateful to the rational Mind, and gives the happy Poſſeſſor of this nobler Faculty a Share in all the numberleſs Pleaſures which fall within the Compaſs of his Obſervation. And though you may perhaps think the Animal no great Gainer by this new Acquiſition of Intellectual Enjoyments, to which you ſo much prefer thoſe of Senſe; yet if you admit the Reality of them, though you attribute to them ever ſo little Weight, all his former Stock of Pleaſures will be infinitely over-ballanced by it.

PHILEBUS.

I SEE it will be in vain for me to derogate from theſe Intellectual Pleaſures, how ſlender ſoever I may imagine them, ſince you can eaſily throw into the Scale ſo immenſe a Sum of them, as will exceed in

Weight and Number the Earths and Suns you have deſcribed.

SOCRATES.

IT has been already obſerved, that Delight and Admiration reſult from the Perception of Beauty and Symmetry, even in the lower Inſtances of it, which appear in the Inanimate Creation: But the Contemplation of it in its nobler Kinds is found to excite in the Mind Affections more noble and more delightful than Admiration. The peculiar kind of Symmetry, which cauſes ſenſible Pleaſure in Creatures endued with the Perception of it, you ſee, excites Deſire; and you may obſerve an Affection correſponding to Deſire, no leſs naturally flowing from it, in ſuch as are capable of reflecting on the Pleaſures of others.

PHILEBUS.

I VERY plainly perceive how it gives Birth to Deſire; but I confeſs I am at a Loſs to diſcover this Counter-part to it.

SOCRATES.

IS it poſſible, that the tender Heart of PHILEBUS can be a Stranger to the pleaſing Charm of Benevolence!

PHILEBUS.

I OWN I have felt this Charm, as you have rightly named it, ſince it ſeems an unaccountable Deception, tranſporting us out of ourſelves.

So-

SOCRATES.

CAN you think that to be a Deception, which is the genuine Reſult of Reaſon?

PHILEBUS.

WHAT Reaſon, what intelligible Motive, can be aſſigned to excite our Deſire of Pleaſures not our own, and to engage our Concern for the Happineſs of others, except it be perhaps the Hope of a Return, and that is a Regard which terminates in ourſelves?

SOCRATES.

THAT Regard is doubtleſs juſt and reaſonable; but Human Hearts are formed with far nobler Affections.

PHILEBUS.

I TOO well feel the Force of them; and have often wondered by what powerful Influence Nature leads us on to fulfil her Purpoſes, contrary to our own Intereſts.

SOCRATES.

IF we conſider ourſelves as only formed for ſenſible Pleaſures, this may juſtly ſeem unaccountable: But when the Nature of Intellectual Pleaſures is underſtood, the Difficulty vaniſhes. The former conſiſt purely of Private Good, and can only lead to Self-Intereſt: The latter are ſocial, generous, and diffuſive; mutually received and imparted, like the Beams of reflected Light, and encreaſing the more, the more they are communicated. As the Eye is delighted with agreeable Proſpects, notwithſtanding they

are the Poſſeſſions of others: So the Underſtanding is agreeably entertained with the View of Symmetry, whereſoever diſcovered; the Pleaſures ariſing from it are its own, however foreign to it their Objects may be. And as there is this Delight reſulting from the Perception of every inferior Kind of Symmetry, it cannot but reſult with greater Force and Intenſeneſs from the nobler Kinds of it, exciting the pleaſing Affections of Benevolence. Here one Pleaſure becomes the Object of another: The Firſt Pleaſure is indeed foreign to us; but the Secondary Pleaſure, ariſing from the View of it, properly belongs to ourſelves. Thus Private and Publick Good are blended together in theſe nobler Pleaſures of the Underſtanding, and amicably combined in that ſublime and generous Happineſs it was formed to purſue. You may therefore ceaſe to wonder at the myſterious Charm of Benevolence, ſince it plainly appears to flow from Reaſon, and to be the peculiar Attribute of Intelligent Beings. And it may be obſerved, that even thoſe Reſemblances of it we diſcover in irrational Creatures, are owing to the ſecret Influences of Reaſon, not their own.

PHILEBUS.

IT has been maintained with deſerved Applauſe in a new Theory, which would have done Honour to the Academy, that the Diſpoſition to Benevolence, infuſed into

Human

Human Minds, can no otherwiſe be accounted for, than by reſolving it into the Effect of ſome ſuch ſecret Influence, as you have attributed to the Irrational Creatures.

SOCRATES.

THE Manner of this ſecret Influence ſeems ſo unaccountable, that nothing can be explained by a Principle ſo little underſtood. The Origin of this Divine Affection, conveying ſo many Bleſſings to Mankind, like the fruitful Source of the *Nile*, I fear will for ever remain concealed, if it derives its myſterious Courſe from ſo obſcure and unfathomable an Abyſs. A full and perfect Diſcovery of it can only be made by tracing it from the clear and tranſparent Source of Reaſon.

PHILEBUS.

YOU in vain endeavour to derive it from this Fountain. It is not Reaſon, but an Internal Senſe, as this ingenious Theoriſt has obſerved, which enables us to diſcern a Moral Beauty in Benevolence, and determines the Mind to approve and delight in it.

SOCRATES.

LET us then a little examine into this curious Senſation: I preſume it has at leaſt ſome Reſemblance of thoſe of our external Senſes.

PHI-

PHILEBUS.

As the Author of Nature has determined us to receive, by our external Senſes, pleaſant or diſagreeable Ideas of ſenſible Objects; ſo has He, by giving us a Moral Senſe, determined our Minds to receive amiable or unlovely Ideas of Actions or Affections.

SOCRATES.

THE Moral Beauties we diſcern in kind Affections are then anſwerable to the agreeable Colours, which appear to be diffuſed over viſible Objects; and conſequently are, like them, not diſcoverable by the Powers of Reaſon, but of Senſe.

PHILEBUS.

THE Parallel you have drawn between them, is perfectly juſt.

SOCRATES.

YOU will own that Colours have no Exiſtence in the Object, but only in the Mind of the Beholder.

PHILEBUS.

IT is a Truth generally allowed by Philoſophers.

SOCRATES.

THE ſame Object might then aſſume various, and contrary Appearances, if the Senſe were even differently formed, or the Mind had received a contrary Determination.

PHILEBUS.

I READILY acknowledge it.

SOCRATES.

IN the ſame Manner, the Moral Beauties, anſwering to theſe fleeting Colours, might be varied, or transferred from kind to malevolent Affection, by a different Conſtitution of the Moral Senſe.

PHILEBUS.

IT ſeems ſo.

SOCRATES.

AND is then kind Affection thus indifferent, and thus equally ſuſceptible of Beauty or Deformity? Has it no real inherent Excellency, inſeparably belonging to it, and independent on any arbitrary Determination?

PHILEBUS.

IT would be hard to deny ſuch manifeſt Truths, as the real Excellency and the unalterable Beauty of kind Affection.

SOCRATES.

IF theſe are Truths, are they not diſcoverable by Reaſon?

PHILEBUS.

THE Diſcovery of Truth peculiarly belongs to this Faculty.

SOCRATES.

THE Diſcernment of Moral Beauty or Excellency muſt then be placed in the Underſtanding, and not in an Internal Senſe.

PHILEBUS.

I CONFESS I cannot extricate myſelf from this Difficulty; but the ſagacious Inventor of this new Syſtem of Morals has too much Subtilty to be entangled in ſuch obvious Snares.

SOCRATES.

IT would then be unfair for us, in his Abſence, to enter into a farther Examination of this celebrated Theory. The Argument we are engaged in, only obliges me to obſerve to you, that the Pleaſures aſcribed by me to the Underſtanding, would remain the ſame, equally real and equally great, though, according to the Opinion of this Philoſopher, they ſhould be infuſed into the Mind from another Source. But when I ſee a Perſon of ſuch uncommon Sagacity and Acuteneſs, ſurrounded with Intellectual Beauties of every Kind, and acknowledging the Force of their Charms, and yet denying them to belong to the glorious Objects, in which they are inſeparably inherent, and ſearching after them, amidſt the Obſcurity of Irrational Inſtincts and Imaginary Senſations, I cannot forbear ſmiling at ſo lively an Image of the profound Philoſopher, covered with innumerable Boughs, and complaining that the Sight of the Wood was intercepted by the branching Shades.

PHI-

PHILEBUS.

IT is not mine to determine ſo nice a Controverſy concerning the Riſe of Benevolence; but if its pleaſing Charms be admitted, from whatever Source they flow, the Followers of Virtue will perhaps appear leſs diſintereſted, than is ſometimes pretended.

SOCRATES.

I KNOW not what extravagant Pretenſions may have been made to Diſintereſtedneſs: But wherever an Intereſted View is mentioned as an Imputation, it ought always to be underſtood of ſome meaner Intereſt; nor is even this juſtly blameable, unleſs where an higher Intereſt ought to have been the Principal Inducement. The nobler Intereſts, and the ſublimer Pleaſures, inſeparably annexed to Virtue, are ſo far from being an Allay to it, that, on the contrary, the very Powers and Capacities of Taſting are the higheſt Moral Excellencies; and a Diſregard to them argues at leaſt a great Imperfection, if not an entire Abſence of Virtue. An Inſenſibility to theſe Charms is that Stupidity and Perverſeneſs, which renders Vice ſo juſtly odious and contemptible; and a Diſintereſtedneſs with reſpect to them, inſtead of being celebrated as Heroic, and Praiſe-worthy, deſerves to be treated with the utmoſt Reproach and Cenſure.

PHILEBUS.

I APPROVE your generous Warmth in the Defence of Pleaſures, though of a different Kind from thoſe I have undertaken to defend.

SOCRATES.

How hard is PHILEBUS to be perſuaded, that I am Impartial in the Defence of Pleaſures, merely becauſe this very Impartiality obliges me to give the Preference to thoſe of the nobler Kinds? It is allowed that the Senſe of Pleaſure is a Perfection above Inſenſibility: But then, as there are Pleaſures excelling each other in various Degrees, the Senſe of thoſe that are more excellent, is yet a greater Perfection. To this is owing all the Virtue and Wiſdom of ſacrificing the meaner Pleaſures to the more noble and excellent. And as thoſe of the nobleſt Kind have none which can juſtly be preferred before them, there is no room for any Praiſe or Virtue in declining them; no Pretence for diſregarding them, which is not big with Abſurdity and Affectation.

PHILEBUS.

I ACKNOWLEDGE the Wiſdom of ſacrificing the leſſer Pleaſures to the greater: But your Deſcription of theſe nobler Pleaſures is ambiguous; you have not told us diſtinctly, whether they are greater, as well as nobler, than thoſe of the meaner Kinds.

So-

SOCRATES.

THEY are endowed with the greateſt Advantages, as well as adorned with the higheſt Excellencies; and as they conſiſt in what is moſt tranſcendently amiable, they combine in inſpiring what is moſt intenſely delightful.

PHILEBUS.

IF your Deſcription of them be juſt, how is it poſſible they can have ſo little Influence?

SOCRATES.

THEIR Influence is proportionable to their Excellence, in every Mind which has formed in itſelf a Capacity of apprehending it: But where this Capacity is wanting, the greateſt Inſenſibility may eaſily be accounted for. Pleaſure is a Being of a relative Nature, ariſing from the Congruity of the Objects to the Faculties they were deſigned for; and without this Suitableneſs it can have no Exiſtence. In vain would the Roſe breath her Odours, or the Vine ſwell her tempting Cluſters, were there no Creatures endued with the proper Organs of Taſte or Smelling, formed to receive Delight from them. In like manner the unregarded Ideas of Beauty and Harmony in vain riſe before the undelighted Underſtanding, if it be not duly cultivated, and accuſtomed to attend to the various Perfections of Art and Nature. Theſe Perfections we have already

traced, through all the lower Ranks of Beings, to ſuch as are endued with Life and Senſe, exciting different Degrees of Delight, Admiration or Benevolence in rational Minds, tranſported with the View of the amazing Variety and Beauty of the Works of the Divine Hand, diſpoſed in ſuch wondrous Order throughout the immenſe Regions of the Univerſe. The higher Order of Intelligent Beings next demands our Attention, infinitely ſurpaſſing in Beauty and Excellence the ſubordinate Ranks of Creatures unintelligent, inſenſible, and inanimated; as theſe inferior Orders, in this deſcending Scale, mutually excel each other, and differ not only in Degree, but in Kind. This ſuperior Beauty of Intelligent Beings is gradually formed in them by their reaſoning Powers; in its Beginnings faint and obſcure, feebly diſplaying a few ſcattered Rays of dawning Luſtre; ſlowly advancing, and enlarging its little Sphere, as its Knowledge grows more extenſive, enriching the Mind with new Diſcoveries and Images of Things, and variouſly affecting it in proportion to the Dignity and Excellence of the Objects it contemplates. The Ideas of Order, Symmetry, and Beauty, when firſt diſcovered, as through a Glaſs, by the Medium of Senſe, fill it with Delight and Admiration, ſtill encreaſing more and more, as it becomes more attentive to theſe engaging Ideas, and

more

more accurate in the Obſervation of theſe Charms, ſo profuſely poured over the whole Creation. The amuſing Sight of the beauteous Tribes of Animals, gaily diſporting in their ſeveral Elements, and partaking the innocent Enjoyments of Senſe, firſt touch the tender Mind with the delightful Affections of Benevolence; unleſs perhaps, by a pleaſing Deception, they were before infuſed into its inexperienced Thought by the tender Tribes of breathing Flowers and Plants. This early Diſpoſition to Tenderneſs, ariſing on the firſt Impreſſions of its proper Objects on our Infant Thoughts, is more engaged by ſuch Animals, as are found feeding together in Herds, and are governed by kindly Inſtincts and gentle Diſpoſitions, than by thoſe of the wild and ſavage Kinds, as they afford a pleaſing View of Concord and Innocence. If any of theſe favoured Animals are attacked by thoſe of an hoſtile Kind; if the tender Lamb or Kid be purſued by the Wolf, iſſuing from the treacherous Woods; or the Turtle purſues with unavailing Grief his bleeding Mate, expiring in the Talons of the Hawk, and pants to ſee her beauteous Plumage falling from the pitying Skies; our benevolent Affections are exerted with redoubled Force on ſuch moving Occaſions. And if ever the Creatures of a fiercer Make and Temper move our Delight or Approbation, it is

by

by ſtriking the Mind with an Image of Courage or Magnanimity, or ſome ſuch Shadow of Moral Beauty.

PHILEBUS.

IN theſe Preludes to Moral Affection, theſe tender Rudiments of Benevolence or Pity, Diſlike or Approbation, occaſioned by the Actions of Animals preſented to our View, the Mind ſeems fond of its own Likeneſs, and pleaſed with the Reſemblances of its own Affections.

SOCRATES.

THE kindly Inſtincts obſervable in Animals are indeed mere Shadows of rational Benevolence, and ought not to be confounded with it: And, if even theſe faint Reſemblances are grateful to the Mind, how much more muſt it be delighted with the Affections themſelves, when diſcovered in a more beauteous Race of Beings of its own Kind?

PHILEBUS.

THE Pleaſure will doubtleſs riſe higher, in proportion as the Reſemblance is more perfect. But whence this Fondneſs of our own Reſemblance, this Complacency in reviewing in the Minds of others a Conformity to our own Affections?

SOCRATES.

WISDOM, ever conſtant and invariable, cannot but always approve, wherever found, the Affections flowing from itſelf.

PHI-

PHILEBUS.

WHENCE then the great Diverſity of Affections in the Minds of Rational Creatures?

SOCRATES.

TRUTH is the Parent of Beauty and Symmetry in the Affections flowing from it, and Error of Deformity. If therefore you apprehend how Error ſprings up in the Underſtanding, you diſcover at the ſame time the Source of wrong Affection. But leaving the infinite Varieties of Error, by which Minds are diverſified and deformed, let us proceed to conſider them as united by Truth and Knowledge, with all the beauteous Train of regular Affections reſulting from thence. This is the Source of Agreement and Reſemblance, of mutual Approbation and Eſteem, of merited Love and Affection, of Moral Beauty and Harmony, diffuſed throughout the Intellectual World. This is that ſovereign Beauty which fills with Tranſports of Delight and Extaſy all the various Orders of Intelligent Beings, beholding it with inſatiable Deſire, and rejoycing in it with inexpreſſible Exultation and Triumph, as the Fountain of their Perfection and Bliſs, their Joy and Excellence, their Happineſs and Glory. Touched with a Ray of this Celeſtial Beauty, every Heart ſhould be enflamed with Love and Veneration, every Voice ſhould celebrate its adorable Attractions, joyn-

joyning with the univerſal Choir of Creatures endued with Reaſon, and bearing a Part in the melodious Hymn reſounding from World to World throughout the Ethereal Regions, in Preſence of the great All-comprehenſive Mind, the glorious Archetype of this Celeſtial Beauty, not undelighted with the ſacred Harmony inſpired by Himſelf, and taught by his ſupreme Wiſdom.

PHILEBUS.

I AM almoſt forced to yield to the Rapture inſpired by this ſublime Subject, which too ſtrongly overpowers my Reaſon, and renders it unable to reſiſt the Torrent of your Eloquence. But if you hope entirely to convince me, you muſt deſcend from this exalted Strain, and try if by the plain Language of calm and temperate Reaſoning, unaided by the Force of lofty Thoughts and Numbers, you can make me ſenſible of this Moral Charm, which ſeems to have ſo little Power over Human Hearts.

SOCRATES.

THERE is no Doubt, but that ſuperior Beings, who perceive this Charm in all its Glory, entertain much higher Sentiments of it than can be expreſſed in our imperfect Language, or perhaps by their own Seraphic Eloquence. But even thoſe fainter Traces of it, which may be diſcerned by our Underſtanding, and which not unfrequently appear in our Actions, are ſufficient to make

us apprehend from a few Features, how powerfully this Beauty would engage our Affections, did we view it perfectly formed in all its divine Lineaments. I need only appeal to your exquiſite Taſte of Poetry, to make you ſenſible of the Force of its Charms, which are every where diffuſed over the Works of the greateſt Poets, and make the ſtrongeſt Impreſſions on the Reader, wondring why he is thus moved by the Deſcription of beautiful Paſſions, and tranſported beyond himſelf by the ſhining Examples of Heroic Virtues. Hence the artful Muſe is perpetually intent on pleaſing Sorrows, and employed in forming Scenes of amiable Diſtreſs. Hence ſhe delights to grace with every endearing Charm the blooming Youth, ſaddening the Virgins with his untimely Fate; or mourns the tender Spouſe, reſigning with a laſt Embrace her Heroe, half encloſed in rugged Steel, and with Tears in vain accuſing his unrelenting Love of Glory.

PHILEBUS.

THESE pleaſing Sorrows ſeem to furniſh an Objection to your Hypotheſis, which repreſents the Sight of Joy and Pleaſure as delightful, and ſhould conſequently make us look with Horror on Pain and Grief.

SOCRATES.

THE Pleaſure inſpired by theſe gloomy Scenes, does not ariſe from the Sorrows or the Sufferings repreſented in them, but

from the Tenderneſs, the Fidelity and Conſtancy, and every amiable Virtue, more ſtrongly ſet off by theſe darker Shades, which of themſelves would be diſpleaſing, were they not ſoftened and alleviated by the prevailing Sweetneſs of the Moral Charms agreeably intermingled with them. And it was perhaps for the like Reaſons, that Providence, in forming the Scheme of Human Affairs, at it were in a Divine Poem repreſented on the Theatre of this Earth, has ſo frequently introduced Virtue conflicting with Misfortune and Calamity, to render her more amiable, and more worthy of the unfading Crown reſerved for her. Thus every Part of Human Life, as it is laid out and diſpoſed by Divine Wiſdom, is filled with theſe Moral Beauties, faintly imitated by the greateſt Maſters of Epic Poetry, which at preſent alleviate every Affliction of ſuch as are duly ſenſible of them, and will abundantly contribute to their Happineſs, when this glorious Piece, ſurpaſſing the weak Contrivance of Human Thought, ſhall be crowned with univerſal Applauſe, and the wide-extended Theatre, whereon it has been exhibited, ſhall reſound with everlaſting Praiſes, and every Tongue ſhall bleſs the Wiſdom employed in framing it.

PHILEBUS.

IF this Obſervation be juſt, a Poet who has not a good Taſte of theſe Moral Beauties,

ties, muſt be very unskilful in his own Art.

SOCRATES.

IF you have ever ſeen a Piece of Painting or Sculpture, the Work of ſome laborious Hand, faithfully copying even the moſt beautiful and regular Features, but wanting the Power to animate them with the leaſt Traces of Thought or Paſſion; a Pourtraiture or a Statue thus cold and lifeleſs, thus weak and languid, may give you a juſt Image of a Poem filled with the gay Colouring of unenlivened Deſcriptions, but left void of theſe animating Charms, which not only furniſh the choiceſt Ornaments of Poeſy, but even of Muſic and Painting, and of every nobler Art, which riſes to the Dignity of expreſſing tender Paſſions and Heroic Sentiments. Theſe are the peculiar Beauties of Minds, ſpreading a Glory through the Intellectual World, as thoſe beſtowed on Bodies are diffuſed over the material Creation: And as far as Minds excel Bodies, ſo far do their tranſcendent Beauties outſhine thoſe that are impreſſed on the groſs Texture of Corporeal Beings. As the pleaſing Effect muſt be proportioned to the Cauſe, ſuch as is the Beauty, ſuch muſt be the enchanting Pleaſure it is formed to inſpire. And if ſo great are the ſacred Pleaſures ariſing from the Contemplation of theſe exalted Beauties in other Minds, muſt we not feel a conſcious Satisfaction, more intimately delightful

and tranſporting, in contemplating them, when tranſcribed into our own?

PHILEBUS.

IT is highly reaſonable to think ſo. But are they not then of our own native Growth? Or from what beautiful Original are they tranſcribed?

SOCRATES.

THEY are originally and eſſentially inherent only in one all-perfect Mind: In all other Minds, they are merely Tranſcripts, or Shadows derived from thence. In this reſpect, Minds may be likened to Mirrours, receiving into themſelves various Images of Things by the perceptive Power of the Underſtanding, and embelliſhed by every beautiful Image they receive. Theſe Intellectual Mirrours, not only receiving but retaining the beauteous Objects preſented to them, far exceed the Capacity of thoſe formed of the pureſt Chryſtal, as the Beauties delineated in them are not fleeting and ſhadowy, but real and permanent. They likewiſe reſemble Mirrours in another Property, as they have a Power of communicating to others and propagating the Impreſſions they receive, though ſtill fainter and more faint, the farther they are removed from the Original Beauty. Such of them as are immediately admitted to a clearer Intuition of the infinite Source of Beauty and Wiſdom, are the Firſt in Happineſs and Perfection: But all

all who are in any Degree capable of receiving even the more diſtant Reflections from thence, cannot but be in ſome Meaſure embelliſhed and irradiated by the Luſtre of Wiſdom and Beauty imparted to them. And the more it is put into their Power to contemplate, with Diligence and Attention, Objects of greater Dignity and Excellence, the more it is left to their own Choice and Care to enrich and adorn their Minds, and to be transformed from Beauty to Beauty, as they make nearer Approaches to the Divine Reſemblance and Similitude. Thus advancing in Beauty and Virtue, they muſt advance in the pureſt and the nobleſt Delight, reſulting from the conſcious Senſe of it in their own Minds. And do not you apprehend a ſecondary Kind of Satisfaction, not unlike to the firſt, or unequal to it, flowing from the ſame Source?

PHILEBUS.

I FEAR I muſt ask your Aſſiſtance in the Diſcovery of it.

SOCRATES.

YOU could perhaps make a better Gueſs at the ſecret Cauſe of that innocent Satisfaction a blooming Virgin takes in her own Beauty.

PHILEBUS.

YOU mean perhaps the Power of inſpiring Love.

So-

SOCRATES.

I KNOW not whether the beauteous Virgin will admit the Truth of your Conjecture: But I own it has rightly diſcovered my Meaning.

PHILEBUS.

WE will not then rudely preſs an Acknowledgment from her: I am only ſolicitous to know your Inference from it.

SOCRATES.

WE have obſerved that Moral Beauty is the ſtrongeſt Cauſe of mutual Approbation, Eſteem and Affection, between the beauteous and happy Beings who are adorned with it. This engaging Principle, by rendering them mutually amiable, forms the precious Bands of Society, and creates each endearing Tye of Love and Friendſhip. Thus every Advantage, every Delight, every refined Satisfaction, flowing from a Commerce, which can only be maintained between the Members of an Intellectual Community, endued with various Capacities of Meriting and Obliging, and employing their united Powers in advancing the common Happineſs, is owing to this Moral Charm; the Fruits of which will be reaped by them in greater Abundance, as they poſſeſs it in a higher Perfection.

PHILEBUS.

THE moſt beautiful will indeed be the moſt beloved.

So-

SOCRATES.

BUT will they raiſe equal Love in every Beholder? Or will they not rather kindle a nobler Flame in ſuch as are more capable of diſcerning and eſteeming their Beauty?

PHILEBUS.

THE Love of Beauty muſt be proportionable to the ſuperior Taſte and Knowledge of it.

SOCRATES.

IS moral Beauty then moſt valued and underſtood by ſuch as are deſtitute of it, or by ſuch as are themſelves endued with it?

PHILEBUS.

A JUST Diſcernment and Eſteem of it is only ſeated in a Mind embelliſhed by it.

SOCRATES.

AND the more perfectly this Beauty is formed in any Mind, its Affections towards every Degree of the ſame Beauty in other Minds will be the more generous and extenſive.

PHILEBUS.

THE nobleſt Minds will doubtleſs be the moſt gracious and condeſcending.

SOCRATES.

AND will not then the Supreme Mind, infinitely ſurpaſſing in Goodneſs and Condeſcenſion every created Excellence, yet more graciouſly incline, from amidſt the Splendors where He ſits enthroned, to beſtow a favourable Regard even on the low-

eſt Degree of true and genuine Beauty of this amiable Kind, ſo precious in his Sight? Will He not behold with the tendereſt Compaſſion every ſincere, though unſucceſsful, Attempt to attain to greater Meaſures of it; and vouchſafe his willing Aid and Guidance to a Soul thus weakly aſpiring with reſtleſs Deſires to approach his Preſence, and to receive the fuller Emanations of his Glory? How muſt the Soul, thus humbly aſpiring, rejoice in a well-grounded Hope even of the ſmalleſt Meaſures of his Love! Or what can it promiſe itſelf leſs from his Favour, than Happineſs and Immortality; Gifts worthy to be beſtowed by his Hand, and far too precious to be conferred by any Power leſs than Divine! And, as we receive all leſſer Advantages from Men, in conſequence of their Friendſhip and Affection, may it not be reaſonably hoped that the common Gifts of Providence will be ſuperadded, as an Appendage to thoſe nobler Bleſſings, which are the immortal Fruits of Love Divine? The leſſer Bounties, promiſcuouſly diſpenſed, cannot but be very inſecurely enjoyed, nor can their Continuance be long expected, by ſuch as forfeit the Divine Favour: While thoſe who are ſo happy as to retain it, enjoy the ſureſt Expectation of being renewed in a more flouriſhing State, by that gracious Power which firſt called them into Being, and by that never-

never-failing Goodneſs, which can never forſake them in any Part of an endleſs Duration. Thus even the Pleaſures of the Senſes (and perhaps of Senſes more refined than thoſe we enjoy at preſent) the innocent Delights reſulting from our Faculties, when enlarged and improved, and the Diſcoveries that may be made hereafter in every inferior Btanch of Knowledge, by our enlightened Underſtandings, all of them depend on our faithful Endeavours to improve in Moral Beauty and Wiſdom: But however theſe leſſer Enjoyments may be juſtly eſteemed as valuable Parts of our Happineſs, yet they cannot in the leaſt be brought in Competition with the larger Draughts we ſhall then take of the exalted Pleaſures flowing from this diviner Source of Bliſs, which will kindle an inſatiable Thirſt in all who ſhall be admitted to taſte its refreſhing Streams, or to hear its melodious Murmurs, filling every Heart with Gladneſs, and diffuſing Immortal Joys amongſt the Intellectual Inhabitants of the Univerſe.

PHILEBUS.

I PERCEIVE, it will be in vain for me any longer to diſpute the Preference of this nobleſt Kind of Intellectual Pleaſures to thoſe of Senſe; ſince you will not allow even the more refined and exalted Senſes to be opened in the Soul in that happy State, or even the more delightful Improve-

ments of Knowledge in every inferior Science, to come in competition with the raviſhing Perceptions of Moral Beauty, when revealed to the Mind in its full Luſtre and Perfection. As you ſeem now to have finiſhed your Syſtem of Pleaſures, it will be eaſy for me to form a Scale of them, agreeable to your ſublime Doctrine, and to ſhew how the Senſes riſe above each other, as they bear a nearer Analogy to the Underſtanding, and are more ſubſervient to it in furniſhing a proper Medium for the Diſcernment of Symmetry; Symmetry, that wondrous Charm, which in its varous Kinds and Degrees produces ſo many different Orders of Intellectual Pleaſures, exciting Delight, Admiration and Benevolence, as the proper Objects calling them forth ſucceſſively riſe before the Mind, and filling the Heart with the moſt delightful Affections inſpired by Moral Beauty. But ſay, is there any thing farther we can aſpire after? Or do there only remain higher Degrees of this Beauty, by which we may ever aſcend in a nearer Approach towards its great Original, and go on advancing in a never-ending Progreſs towards Perfection?

SOCRATES.

I HAVE led you to the Entrance of the Path that leads to ſupreme Happineſs, beyond which nothing farther can remain to be aſpired after: May you ever purſue it with

with Succeſs, under the gracious Guidance and Protection of its great Author. Permit me only to mention this one farther Advantage of theſe Moral Pleaſures, that as there is a Moral Excellency in the very Deſire and the Enjoyment, a Virtue even in the Capacity of taſting them, ſo theſe alone of all Pleaſures leave a grateful Reflection behind them, when paſt, and give a Proſpect of a never-ending Flight of Golden Joys to ſucceed. Thus whilſt the fleeting Enjoyments of every other Kind are confined to the preſent Moment, bearing no proportion to our paſt Pleaſures, much leſs to thoſe extending to all Futurity; there is in theſe permanent Satisfactions a certain Fixedneſs and Stability, rendering them ſolid and laſting Foundations, and as it were perpetual Stamina of Happineſs running through our whole Exiſtence, and producing a calm Aſſurance and Serenity, without which no tranſient Pleaſure can give Peace or Repoſe to an immortal Mind.

PHILEBUS.

THE Permanency of theſe Pleaſures muſt be owned to add a value to them equal to that of all the Advantages before recounted; all of which taken together, if not each of them apart, may well be thought ſufficient to incline an impartial Judge to determine in Favour of them.

SOCRATES.

YOU forget that you are to act the Part of an Adverſary, not of a Judge: And do you now think to deprive me of a juſt Triumph, by tamely yielding up the Cauſe, you are no longer able to defend?

PHILEBUS.

WHAT farther Triumph over me can you expect?

SOCRATES.

I WOULD ſee you reſume that Air of Confidence you ſhewed in inſulting me with the Example of a *Perſian* Emperor; and let it be afreſh debated between us, whether the Pleaſures I recommend, or thoſe you inſinuate, would moſt contribute to make ſo great a Monarch happy. The Effects of theſe contrray Merhods of purſuing Happineſs, when thus exemplified, will be diſplayed in their livelieſt Colours, and in their largeſt Dimenſions; and, like an Inſcription already peruſed in more legible Characters, will be the more eaſily traced in the leſſer and more obſcure Examples in every lower Rank of Life.

PHILEBUS.

THE Model of an Emperor formed by your Scheme, will doubtleſs be an uncommon Curioſity, and might furniſh a curious Entertainment to the Court of ſome *Sicilian* Tyrant. He muſt, I preſume, be too intent on the Contemplation of Moral Beauty, and

and too deeply immerſed in the Enjoyment of Intellectual Pleaſures, to regard the low Affairs of Empire, which employ the Thoughts of ordinary Monarchs.

SOCRATES.

THE immenſe Variety of Intellectual Beauties, too great to be comprehended by the moſt enlarged Mind, is diſtributed amongſt the different Ranks and Orders of Men, each of them beſtowing their chief Application on ſome particular Branch of Symmetry, ſome nobler Science, or ſome meaner Work of Mechanic Art, ſuitable to their Genius and Profeſſion. The Civil Magiſtrate has in like Manner his peculiar Portion of the Study of Intellectual Beauty allotted to him; and that, as befits his high Station, of the very nobleſt Kind, demanding his principal Care and Regard.

PHILEBUS.

IT muſt then, according to your Scale of Beauty, be ſome Kind of Moral Symmetry, which is to engage his chief Attention: But this I apprehend to be the Concern of every Private Man, not the diſtinguiſhing Province of a Prince.

SOCRATES.

THERE is a certain Portion of this Beauty, which indiſpenſably ought to be delineated in the Breaſt of every Private Man; and that of a greater Extent, as he is placed in a higher Station of Life: But the

the largeſt and the nobleſt Draught of it is to be formed by the diſtinguiſhing Genius of a Prince; and the happy Skill of finiſhing this glorious Piece in full Perfection is that Heaven-born Science, which conſtitutes a Legiſlator.

PHILEBUS.

POLITICAL Knowledge is then, in your Opinion, only a more extenſive Syſtem of Morality: But is not this Political Morality very different from, and even contrary to, the leſſer Syſtems of this Science belonging to Private Life?

SOCRATES.

THERE is a perfect Reſemblance between them in every Feature and Lineament; ſo very perfect and exact, that a juſt Image of the larger Beauty cannot poſſibly be formed by a Prince, till the Miniature of it is firſt drawn in its true Proportions within his own Breaſt.

PHILEBUS.

ACCORDING to this Notion, every Man has within his own Mind the Model of a Civil Government, and carries about with him a little Community.

SOCRATES.

THIS you may eaſily conceive, if you recollect the various Deſires with which every Breaſt is peopled; the Diſcord and Contention raiſed amongſt them by Anarchy; the hard Reſtraint and Oppreſſion they

they undergo under a Tyrannical Uſurpation; and the harmonious Agreement and juſt Liberty they are reſtored to, by their Submiſſion to the Government of Reaſon.

PHILEBUS.

I REMEMBER the uſurping Pilot, and the Mariners contending for the Helm: But I did not imagine you had the Power of transforming them into a Prince and a People.

SOCRATES.

IT is the Privilege of Philoſophy to make ſuch Transformations, without the help of an enchanted Wand. The Harmony introduced amongſt this contentious People, you ſee, was the Effect of Juſtice: But do you apprehend how it was produced?

PHILEBUS.

THE Diſcovery of the ſecret Springs by which it was effected, will be a very curious Entertainment.

SOCRATES.

THESE tumultuous Deſires are the Springs, exciting to Action the ſeveral Faculties; to the Exerciſe of which is annexed a diſtinct Pleaſure, aimed at by each particular Deſire, and the Publick Good of this little Community, deſigned by the governing Power of Reaſon. Hence theſe Faculties, when employed by the unreſtrained Deſires exciting them to Action, tend to Exceſs and Diſorder, obſtructing each

each other, and defeating the Good they were formed to produce. Thus Diſcord and Oppreſſion are introduced into the Mind by the contending Deſires; ſince the Hindrance of the Purſuit of Happineſs is that peculiar Kind of Reſtraint, which is inconſiſtent with Liberty, and which is the neceſſary Cauſe of Contention. On the contrary, when theſe Faculties are made to act regularly under the Direction of Reaſon, and prevented from interfering with each other, every Deſire is gratified in a juſt proportion of Enjoyment, and the greateſt poſſible Good is obtained by this little Community. Thus enjoying the free Purſuit of Happineſs, they enjoy the moſt perfect Liberty; and aſſiſting each other in this purſuit, they are united in the ſtricteſt Agreement: And it is the Hand of Juſtice which viſibly breaks off the Chains of Reſtraint and Oppreſſion, and forms the indiſſoluble Bonds of Union. If from this Model you trace that Analogy to it, which may be obſerved in a Civil Society, you will find the ſame Effects to follow from the juſt Adminiſtration of a wiſe Lawgiver, which we have obſerved to flow from the Government of Reaſon. The different Orders and Profeſſions of Men, deſigned for different Employments and Offices in a State, ſome ſtudious of various Arts to poliſh and adorn it, ſome furniſhed with Arms for its

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Defence, others ſupplying Nouriſhment to it from fruitful Fields or Oceans, may be found to anſwer with a ſurpriſing Exactneſs to the different Faculties in Human Nature; each of them aiming at a particular Advantage to themſelves, and each of them originally conſtituted and intended for the Publick Benefit and Service. Theſe different Orders in a Civil Society, if ſuffered to purſue their private Advantages without Reſtriction, muſt neceſſarily be involved in Diſcord and Contention, hindering each other in diſcharging their proper Offices, and becoming themſelves unſerviceable to the Publick; as the Members of the Human Body are rendered uſeleſs, when deprived of their due Nouriſhment, or when oppreſſed by too great a Portion of it: But if each of them are ſecured in their juſt Intereſts, and obliged to a due Diſcharge of their ſeveral Functions, they will mutually aſſiſt each other in the Purſuit of Private Good, and their common Happineſs will be advanced to the higheſt Pitch. Thus Liberty and Union will again appear, and own their Birth from Juſtice, as well in a Civil State, as in the Breaſt of a particulat Perſon. A Nation thus flouriſhing in Peace and Tranquility, thus adorned with Harmony and Concord, is the moſt beautiful Spectacle the Earth affords, far excelling the moſt glorious Works of Art, or the moſt delightful Scenes of Na-

ture. And if every inferior Artiſt views with ſecret Pride and Joy, the Works produced by his Hand, or nobler Thought; what Triumph of conſcious Virtue muſt touch the Heart of a Monarch, reviewing the harmonious Order of a powerful and flouriſhing Society, regulated by his Wiſdom, and owing all its Happineſs to that important Regulation! What Honours, what Applauſe, what dutiful Expreſſions of Zeal and Affection, will be paid to him by a grateful People! What Statues, what Hiſtories, what laſting Monuments of Praiſe, will record his Actions, and ſpread his Fame through diſtant Ages and Nations! This ſupreme Degree of Happineſs and Glory, is the genuine Fruit of the Science of the beautiful Meaſures and Proportions of Civil Harmony; without the Knowledge of which a Sceptre, like a Pencil in an unskilful Hand, would prove an uſeleſs Inſtrument, and even deſtructive of that Beauty it was deſigned to produce.

PHILEBUS.

AND do you really think that a Prince, through conſcious Want of Skill to uſe it, would decline the Offer of this glorious Inſtrument, which might prove ſo uſeleſs and ſo deſtructive in his Hands?

SOCRATES.

IF ſome Peaſant, not yet acquainted with the Waves or Winds, and a Novice in the

Art

Art of Navigation, were preferred to be the Pilot of ſome ſtately Veſſel, would you wonder, if he thought himſelf happy, or perhaps was envied by the ill-judging Spectators, whilſt ſailing out of the Harbour, before a favourable Gale, he was animated by the ſhouting Crew, and ſaluted with Acclamations reſounding from the joyful Shoars, as Omens of a proſperous Voyage? But would you think he ſtill deſerved their Envy, could you behold him toſſed by the ſtormy Ocean, and in vain regretting the Safety of his humble Cottage, amidſt the Deſpair and Reſentment of the Mariners, curſing the ill-guided Helm, and periſhing by his fatal Conduct? And yet this is but a faint Image of the inſupportable Weight of Sorrow and Diſhonour, which muſt ſit heavy on the Pilot of a ſhipwrecked Nation, reflecting on the various Calamities cauſed by his Unskilfulneſs in the Kingly Science of Legiſlature. But you will kindly ſave me the Trouble of enlarging on this ungrateful Subject, by giving in your Turn the Example of an Emperor, to be formed by your Counſels, and trained up in the ſoft Delights you have the pleaſing Art of inſinuating with ſuch fatal Advantage. I reſign him into your Hands, to be abandoned to every wandering Deſire the moſt artful Allurements can infuſe, and to be entertained with all the Variety of Pleaſures the moſt unbounded

Affluence can yield; thoſe only excepted of the Moral and Intellectual Kinds, ſo much deſpiſed and diſclaimed by you, as unworthy to waſte his precious Hours.

PHILEBUS.

I ENGAGE, on the Word of a Favourite, to obſerve this Article, and to prevent, even with a ſuperfluous Care, the Danger of his taſting any forbidden Pleaſures of this Sort.

SOCRATES.

LET him then be freely taught to breathe every tender Wiſh, that Love or Youth can form, or Beauty can inſpire. Let him taſte every golden Joy, and employ the ſmiling Hours in following the Chaſe of every fugitive Delight. Lull him in the Softneſſes of Indolence; or, if you pleaſe, fire him with the ſprightly Charms of Ambition; poſſeſs his Soul with the entrancing Thoughts of Glory, and lead him on ſucceſsful to imaginary Wars and Conqueſts.

PHILEBUS.

I FLATTER my ſelf, that I am qualified for the Task you have aſſigned to me, without your Inſtructions. But we will, if you pleaſe, ſuppoſe it happily performed, and that I am ready to produce my Royal Pupil, finiſhed in every Part of his Education, and mature for Empire.

SO-

SOCRATES.

METHINKS I ſee him aſcending the Throne, like the ambitious Youth, encircled by the Fable with the beamy Glories of the *Perſian* God, and mounting the golden Car conveying Light to Mankind.

PHILEBUS.

YOU might have ſpared this unhappy Omen; I hope it is not your Intention to precipitate him from the flaming Skies, like that unfortunate Son of APOLLO.

SOCRATES.

DISMISS your Fears of any ſuddain Cataſtrophe: It is my Deſign to let you obſerve at Leiſure, the more fatal Ills attending him, while he continues to ſhine in that bright Eminence. Do not you already perceive the Reins trembling in his uncertain Hand, and the fiery Courſers hurrying him with wild Diſorder through the affrighted Conſtellations?

PHILEBUS.

A LITTLE Confuſion would be thought not ungraceful in the moſt accompliſhed Actor, at his firſt Appearance on ſo magnificent a Theatre: But you will ſoon ſee him recover an Aſſurance becoming the Brow of Majeſty.

SOCRATES.

LET us then (to purſue this new Alluſion) imagine him arrayed in a Theatrical Robe embroidered with Purple and Gold, holding in

in his unskilful Hand a golden Harp, and in vain exciting in the desiring Audience an Expectation of Harmony.

PHILEBUS.

I SHOULD indeed have Reason to blush for my young *Persian*, if I had not inspired him with a Greatness of Soul above regarding such little Difficulties. You, who are so little acquainted with the Spirit and Genius of a Prince, may perhaps imagine him under the greatest Confusion, and utterly at a loss how to acquit himself on such an Occasion: But, wait a while, and you shall see, with what a graceful Air of Indifference, with what a noble Contempt of the disappointed Audience, he will deliver the golden Harp into the Hands of some State-ORPHEUS, empowered by his Command to charm the *Persians* to Obedience, as that *Thracian* is said to have tamed the Brutes; whilst retiring to the sacred Recesses of his Palace, forbidden to be approached by prophane Mortals, he enjoys in unseen Majesty the mysterious Delights of Empire, the more revered, the more they are concealed from the subject World.

SOCRATES.

AND is it then consistent with the Greatness of Soul becoming a Prince, destined to so large an Empire, to suffer himself thus to be divested of its real Glories, and to be contented to retain only the empty Shadow of

an

an Emperor? Or, admitting that he may be perhaps incapable of forming a noble Ambition to ſhew himſelf worthy of Empire; or that his Incapacity to govern, may oblige him to ſubmit to ſo painful, and ſo inglorious a Condeſcenſion; where alas ſhall he find an ATLAS able to relieve him from the Burthen of Government, and willing to ſupport it in his Stead?

PHILEBUS.

CAN you be ſo weak as to imagine, that Numbers will not offer their Service, ambitious of being preferred to a Station of ſo great Honour and Advantage?

SOCRATES.

THE greater their Numbers, the greater will be the Difficulty of making a prudent Choice. Let us ſuppoſe, for Inſtance, that a Perſon unskilled in Architecture, ſhould undertake to ſignalize himſelf by ſome magnificent Structure; confiding in the borrowed Skill of Inferior Artiſts, offering each of them a Plan calculated for his own Private Advantage; agreeing in nothing but in decrying the Deſigns of Others, and in recommending every one his own; and eſtabliſhing it as a received Maxim, that the Artifice of procuring Employment, not the Science of elegant Proportion, is the ſureſt Mark of a ſuperior Genius for Architecture; what Succeſs do you think he could promiſe himſelf from ſuch a Conduct?

PHI-

PHILEBUS.

BUT is not the Aſſiſtance of Inferior Artiſts neceſſary to an Architect?

SOCRATES.

IT is doubtleſs an important Part of his Skill in this Profeſſion to know how to uſe them, and to make a right uſe of their Aſſiſtance. But if our pretended Architect, wanting the Skill to make a right Choice even of theſe Inferior Aſſiſtants, ſhould leave the Conduct of his whole Deſign to ſome one of them, who had inſinuated himſelf into his Confidence; what could be juſtly expected from this magnificent Deſign, beſides the Vanity of raiſing at a profuſe Expence ſome vaſtly inelegant Structure, to remain a laſting Monument of his Diſgrace?

PHILEBUS.

THIS indeed would probably be the Reward of the Confidence placed in ſuch a Vice-Architect.

SOCRATES.

IF then our young Monarch, wanting the Diſcernment neceſſary to make a good Choice even of the ſubordinate Officers in his Government, ſhould run the mighty Hazard of repoſing on one of theſe Imaginary Pillars of State, the Weight and Care of his whole Empire; would not this Subſtitute of Imperial Authority, thus weakly choſen from the officious Band, ever ready to offer, where it ſeems wanting, that treacherous

cherous and ignoble Aid, which would be rejected with Diſdain by a well-accompliſhed Legiſlator, prove a dangerous and an inſufficient Support, like the feeble Reed, piercing the Royal Hand that leaned upon it?

PHILEBUS.

How then can he ſteer with Safety thro' the Dangers of this faithleſs Ocean, if he can neither truſt to his own Conduct, nor ſecurely rely on the Guidance of others?

SOCRATES.

THERE remains no Reſource for him, in the Circumſtances your Counſels have reduced him to, beſides the painful, though neceſſary Task of tracing back the falſe Steps he has taken, and applying himſelf, perhaps too late, to retrieve the invaluable Treaſures of Princely Knowledge and Virtue he has neglected. In the mean while, the Government, that golden Harp entruſted to his unskilful Hand, muſt of neceſſity be filled with Diſcord and Injuſtice, Violence and Oppreſſion, variouſly prevailing and abounding throughout all its numerous Provinces; nor can theſe ſpreading Miſchiefs be confined to his own Dominions, but will prove injurious to the neighbouring Kingdoms. Hence Wars enſue; if unſucceſsful, the Diſgrace and Calamity he muſt ſuffer from them are viſible: but we will ſuppoſe him crowned with a conſtant Succeſſion of Vic-

tories and Conqueſts, beyond what the moſt unbounded Ambition can aſpire after.

PHILEBUS.

YOU will then at leaſt acknowledge, that he will far outſhine, in all the godlike Charms of Glory, the juſt and unambitious Prince, formed by your regular Scheme of Government.

SOCRATES.

HE may perhaps be induced to ſuffer magnificent Trophies to be erected, or ſit aloft in his triumphal Car, deafened with the loud Acclaim of Nations new to Servitude, and patient of their forced Hypocriſy, ill-concealed in chanting his barbarous Triumphs. The richeſt Colours of Poeſy or Painting may be employed in varniſhing over his falſely virtuous Actions; the lying Marble may proclaim him Immortal or Invincible; and the rival Poets or Hiſtorians may join in flattering him (or perhaps themſelves,) with the ſame empty Promiſe of Immortality. But ſhould ſome vain-glorious and effeminate Youth, new to the Exerciſes of the Field, ſuffer himſelf to be enwreathed by fond officious Hands with the diſhonoured Leaves, deſtined to bind a Brow victorious in the *Olympic* Games, and meanly purchaſe the Applauſe of a mercenary Crowd; would this empty Shew equal the Satisfaction of the juſt Prize obtained in the duſty Race?

PHILEBUS.

IT would expoſe him to the utmoſt Deriſion.

SOCRATES.

AND would not the ſpecious Honours aſſumed by an unjuſt Conqueror appear inglorious and contemptible, in a degree beyond the Power of Laughter to expreſs, if compared with the ſolid and laſting Glories of a virtuous Prince, beloved and honoured by a grateful People, and revered by diſtant Nations, celebrating, not without Envy, the Bleſſings of his righteous Sceptre?

PHILEBUS.

THIS latter Prince would be allowed by the little Commonwealth of Philoſophers to have a truer Taſte of Glory, and the Academy would perhaps reſound with his Triumphs; our youthful Conqueror, tired with the Applauſe of Nations, would not unwillingly reſign to his humble Ambition theſe unenvied Honours.

SOCRATES.

HE would be too well ſecured from the Pain of Envy, or from the more uſeful Paſſion of Emulation, by his want of Wiſdom: But how great ſoever this Want may be imagined, it muſt be inſufficient to conceal from him all the fatal Evils produced by it. The various Scenes of Miſery, of which he had been the unhappy Author, would ſometimes break in upon his View, force themſelves on

his Thoughts, and diſturb his conſcious Slumbers. Where alas! ſhall he turn his Eyes from theſe painful Proſpects every where riſing to his Imagination? How exclude the Heart-wounding Reflections intruding on his ſecret Retirements?

PHILEBUS.

YOUR Simplicity muſt be very great, if you can ſeriouſly believe the Thoughts of a Monarch are to be diſturbed by ſuch idle Dreams, ſo eaſily diverted by numberleſs Delights. And whilſt every thing around him wears a Face of Joy and chearful Gratitude, he will remain no leſs unmoved by the unſeen Calamities of diſtant Provinces, than the ſimple Swain is untouched with the Diſtreſs of ſinking Mariners in Oceans far remote, whilſt he hears the neighbouring Wood gently waving with the Winds, and perhaps contributing to his peaceful Slumbers.

SOCRATES.

AN Emperor, thus lulled into a peaceful Slumber, would burn with implacable Reſentment, ſhould he be awakened out of his golden Dreams of Happineſs by the Voice of Truth, or by the Senſe of offended Juſtice. He rejects with Scorn the ſacred Counſels of Heaven-born Wiſdom, infuſed in vain into his obdurate Heart; a Heart untouched by the Charms of Knowledge, and of all the lovely Train of Affections it gives Birth to. He mocks the unſeen Powers above

above the Clouds, nor hears the Thunders hovering over his devoted Head: And is it to be imagined that Wiſdom or Integrity can be admitted to ſtand before him in any human Shape, or dare to offer him, though in the humbleſt Manner, a juſt Repreſentation of himſelf, or a faithful View of the Calamities of bleeding Nations, produced by his unrighteous Government?

PHILEBUS.

THE wiſeſt, if they obey the Counſels of their own Wiſdom, will refuſe ſo dangerous and ſo deſperate an Undertaking.

SOCRATES.

HE muſt then be ſurrounded with Flatterers and Sycophants, in their worſt and moſt dangerous Diſguiſes, covered with ſpecious Honours, and rendered venerable by the imaginary Characters of a profound Knowledge in the great Affairs of Empire, deeply engraven in their dark and myſterious Countenances. Unhappy Situation! —— How fatal, if he is deceived by their Diſſimulation! How frightful, if he diſcerns what is concealed beneath the Mask! Their kind Endeavours will not be wanting to unmask each other: But ſhould his Ear be deaf to every Whiſper uttered againſt ſome favourite Miſchief, ſome Court-Viper creeping into his Boſom, and inſinuating itſelf unfelt, he will at length be undeceived, when he feels the ſad Effects of its Perfidiouſneſs.

PHI-

PHILEBUS.

HOWEVER he may diſcover the mutual Treachery of his Courtiers, endeavouring to undermine each other, he will be too well armed with all the Powers of Puniſhment to apprehend it will be employed againſt himſelf.

SOCRATES.

THESE dreadful Engines of Tyranny, often turned againſt ſuch as leaſt deſerve them by the Artifices inſpired by a deeper Guilt, will prove far leſs effectual Inſtruments of teaching them Virtue and Integrity, than of arming againſt himſelf their ſecret Hatred and implacable Reſentments. His Preſence will become terrible to his Attendants; their very Fears will be conſtrained, leſt they ſhould be interpreted as Marks of conſcious Guilt; nor will they even dare to tremble at his Approach. A gloomy Silence, mixt with Terror and Reſtraint, will reign in the magnificent Apartments of Regal State; where the majeſtick Figures of his Anceſtors, frowning from the golden Arras, will ſeem to pity or upbraid their degenerate Succeſſor. Every ſecret Cabinet in his Palace will conceal the direful Complots of Fiend-like Treachery and Malice, not to be diſcovered or guarded againſt by Penetration itſelf; and the leſs he is endued with a diſcerning Genius, the greater will be his Jealouſy and undiſtinguiſhing Diſtruſt, even of ſuch as are moſt

moſt faithful to him. Amidſt theſe perplexing Anxieties, every Pleaſure will languiſh, every Joy will fade away, every tender Bloſſom of Delight will be deſtroyed, as by ſome noxious Wind or peſtilential Blaſt. His Mind, ſoftened with perpetual Luxuries, and long abandoned to its Paſſions, when left thus deſtitute of its wonted Enjoyments, and torn by the fierceſt Reſentments, will continually prey on itſelf; and every thing that was tender or amiable in his Temper will be effaced, and obſcured with black and horrid Sentiments. In vain does the Lyre employ its healing Charms to ſooth theſe Sorrows; in vain is every enchanting Amuſement ſought to relieve this ſettled Melancholy, for which no Medicine can be found. Mean while he is alarmed with the unwelcome Rumour of ſome riſing Rebellion, or ſome formidable Alliance formed by hoſtile Powers; or perhaps his Boſom feels a nearer Wound from ſome home-felt Diſturbance, ſome Tragic Incident within his own Family, piercing his Soul in the tendereſt Part, and baniſhing the laſt Remains of Peace from his unquiet Breaſt. Offended with theſe ceaſeleſs Cares and Sorrows, Sleep flies inexorable, in vain recalled by the complaining Voice of Winds whiſpering through penſive Groves, or invited by the wooing Murmurs of the Nymph from the diſtant Caſcade. Health feels a ſwift Decay, not to be reſtored

ſtored by Herbs, or precious Balms; and the Infirmities of Age, advancing before its time, adds to the Load of Royal Afflictions. And are theſe the Joys of Empire? Are theſe the Features to be traced in a glorious and a happy Monarch? — But it is time to throw aſide the Pencil, unwillingly employed on a Piece ſo much overcharged with Sorrows. Perhaps, at the Cloſe of Life, a beauteous Beam of Wiſdom breaks in upon his gloomy Thoughts; his dazzled Senſe perceives at length, revealed in its full Luſtre, every lovely Charm of Virtue, offered now no more to his polluted Boſom; his raviſhed Eyes purſue with vain regret the parting Viſion, amiably ſevere, piercing his ſickening Heart; his ſhuddering Spirit ſinks in Terrors, reſerved to be diſcloſed in Death, and not to be conceived without diſſolving the tender Frame of Human Nature. And is it neceſſary that I ſhould proceed in deſcribing this melancholy Scene, or render it yet more gloomy by the Horror of thoſe juſt Puniſhments prepared for every great Offender by the wiſe and gracious Governor of the World? He originally formed Mankind for the noble Enjoyments of ſocial Happineſs: And, ſince the Attainment of it muſt depend on their mutual Endeavours, can it be conſiſtent with his Wiſdom or Goodneſs to ſuffer his gracious Deſign to be fruſtrated, by permitting the Injuſtice of thoſe who break

break in upon this Moral Harmony to go on for ever uncontrouled? It is indeed highly agreeable to his Wiſdom to leave them for a Time to their own Conduct, in order to afford a Field for the Exerciſe and Improvement of every Virtue, and to give them an Opportunity to diſtinguiſh themſelves by a right Behaviour, under a Variety of intricate and perplexing Circumſtances: But when the Period ordained for theſe wiſe Purpoſes ſhall be accompliſhed, he will ſeaſonably interpoſe in Mercy to Mankind, and effectually reſtrain by a juſt and neceſſary Severity, thoſe Sons of Violence, who ſhall ſo long have diſturbed the Happineſs of a World, by ungenerouſly refuſing to comply with the gentler Inducements of Moral Obligation.

PHILEBUS.

THE grateful Hour of Duſk approaches; methinks I hear the inviting Sound of Lutes, intermixed with ſofter Voices, wafted hither from yonder Grot, and conveying a kind Admonition to loſe theſe anxious Thoughts in Pleaſures, ſuch as may infuſe new Sentiments into the Hearts of theſe Strangers, if they can truſt their Virtue to abide ſo dangerous a Teſt. The elegant Entertainment prepared by PROTARCHUS may perhaps prevail, where my weaker Argument has failed.

PROTARCHUS.

NATIVE of *Athens* (for ſuch your Graceſulneſs of Language well inſtructs me to ſalute you) or rather, if my flattering Thought deceives me not, that Wiſeſt of her Sons, whoſe improving Converſe I ſo long have wiſhed to experience, and whoſe engaging Manner you ſeem ſo much to reſemble; may I preſume to hope you will forgive the innocent Stratagem, ſo well concerted between Us and your Companion, and often be induced, without his treacherous Aid, to honour us with your Preſence, no leſs welcome or leſs grateful to me, than to your own ALCIBIADES. Let this Evening be freely given to the hoſpitable Rites of Friendſhip and ſocial Mirth, not unimproved by the ſerious Pleaſantries of your inſtructive Genius: To-morrow, when theſe flowery *Limes*, no longer envying the ſpreading *Platanus* conſecrated to Immortality by the Deſcription of PLATO, ſhall again invite you to their liſtening Shades, we will repeat with you the ſeverer Entertainments of Philoſophy, rendered ſo agreeable by your ſuperior Skill in Pleaſures.

Errors of the Preſs.

PAGE 10. Line 14. for *Happin*: read *Happineſs*. p. 24. l. 9. for *great*, r. *greateſt*. p. 40. l. 3. for *mixt*, r. *mix*. p. 52. l. 8. for *than the other Senſes*, r. *than to the other Senſes*. p 94. l. 23. for *even differently formed*, r. *differently formed*.

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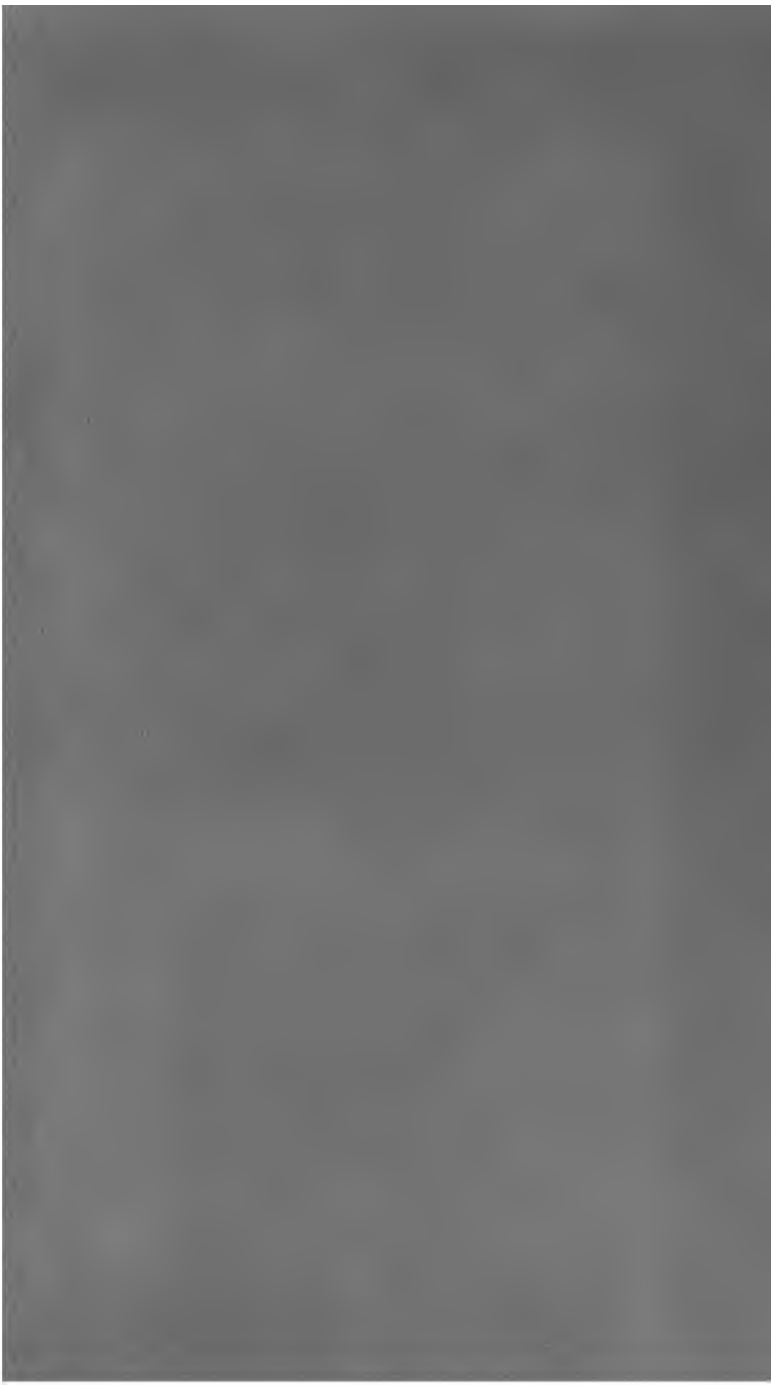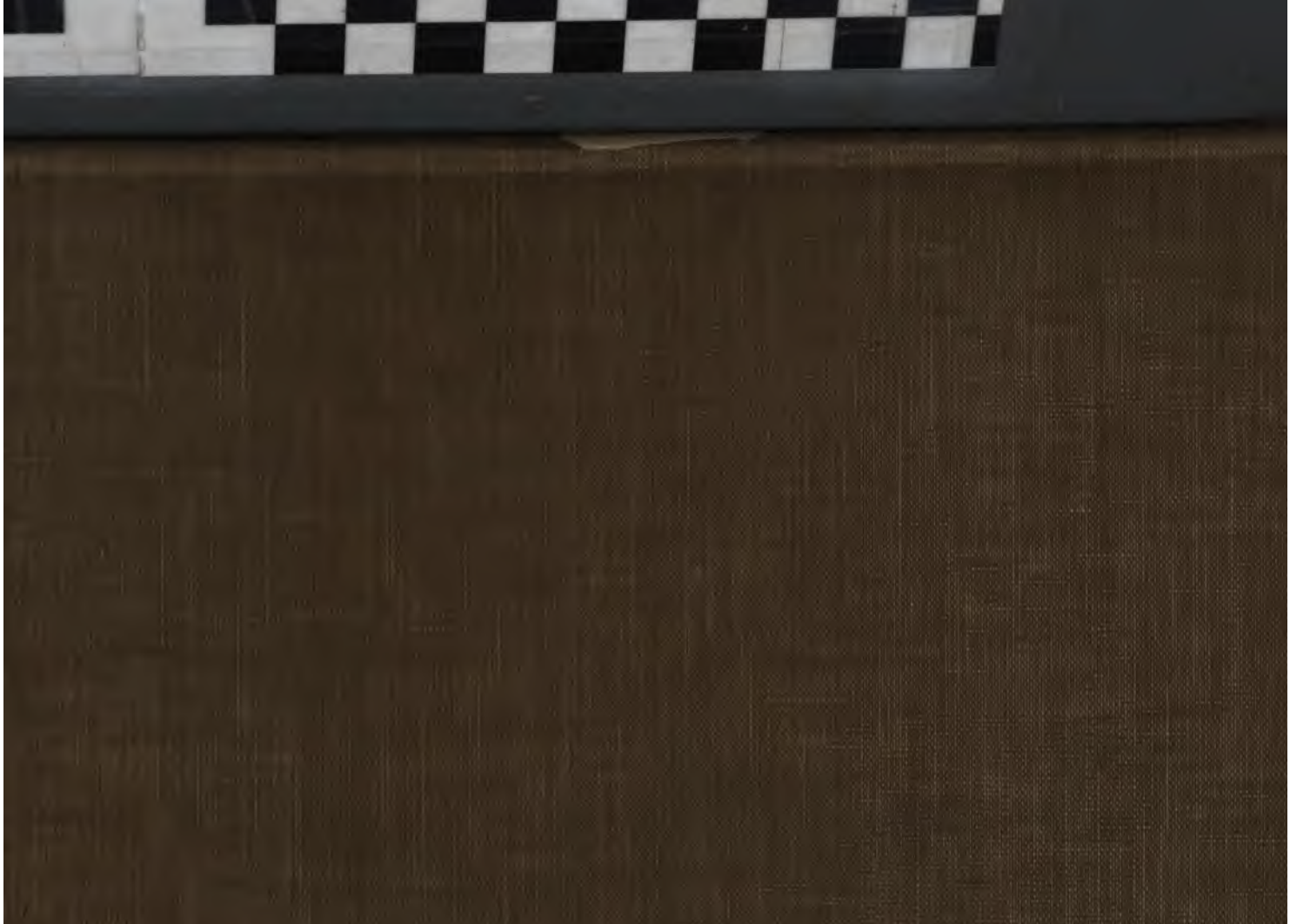
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